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EZEKIEL

AN AMERICAN COMMENTARY
ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

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By

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INTRODUCTION

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The incidents in the history of the period ascribed to Ezekiel were most significant. They were landmarks in international movements. It was a testing time for the peoples of Palestine. Samaria, the northern kingdom, had fallen before Assyria in 722 B. C., a century before the birth of our prophet. Many Israelites from the north had quickly transferred their loyalties to Jerusalem; Southerners, with political interests, soon dreamed of boundaries vying with those of the kingdom of David; and Assyrian religion had camped on the door-step of Judah. The year 701 B. C. heard Sennacherib knock at the gates of the Holy City and saw him carry off the treasure that was in the temple and in the palace (2 Kings 18: 14-16); yet later tradition rejoiced that Yahweh had given them the victory and that they had won the war (cf. 2 Kings 19: 32-37).

From 684 to 641 Judah, ruled by Manasseh, was a tributary state to Assyria, and pagan religion was established in the temple at Jerusalem. But revolt smouldered in Judah and Samaria. Patient underground work was being done; history was reinterpreted; the great prophets were studied; the laws were being edited and revised, and an outbreak of religious enthusiasm—in favor of Yahwism—in 621 made Deuteronomy the law of the whole land. It is probable that Ezekiel was born about this time.

International history moved apace. Assyria went to her doom; in 612 her famed capital, Nineveh, fell, never to be rebuilt, and in 605 her empire was at an end. The same year Nebuchadrezzar, heir to the new Babylonian empire, in the battle at Carchemish crushed Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, who was claiming "a place in the sun" (Jer. 46: 3-12). A year later, Nebuchadrezzar, the outstanding world-figure, became king of Babylonia. In 604 Judah became the vassal of this new empire (2 Kings 24: 7). But rebellion was in the air, and in 601 she joined a local movement against her liege lord; and suffered for it (2 Kings 24: 2); but refused to learn wisdom. In 598 B. C. Nebuchadrezzar marched against Jerusalem, and after a year and a half captured the city and carried into captivity her most important citizens (Jer. 22: 24-50; 24: 1-10; 12: 7-17). All Palestine became a Babylonian fief. War seems to be a habit-forming drug. Rebellion broke out in 593 (Jer. 27: 26; 17: 3); and in due time Jerusalem was again invested by her master, and in 586 reduced to ruins, while the surrounding country was desolated (2 Kings 25: 1-12; Jer. 34: 7).

In the meantime the Egyptian ruler, Hophra, had made a feeble sally from the border of Egypt to relieve the strain on his ally, besieged in Jerusalem, 587 B. C. With apparently slight effort Nebuchadrezzar put him to flight (Jer. 37: 5).

With the fall of Jerusalem Gedaliah, a prince of Judah, was appointed by Babylonian authority local governor of Judah. At the end of a few months he and his foreign guard were murdered by the tool of a neighboring tribe. A group of fearful Jews fled to Egypt for security (2 Kings 25: 22-26; Jer. 40: 7–43: 13). It is probable that in 581 Nebuchadrezzar exacted his toll of Jerusalem by taking 745 Jews into captivity (Jer. 52: 30).

With the fall of the chief city of the hill country Nebuchadrezzar turned his attention to the wealthiest of the coast cities, Tyre. His army destroyed the mainland city without much trouble, but for twelve years he camped opposite the island city without being able to reduce it (Ezek. 29: 17-20). Wearied with this, he withdrew, and in 568 made an attack on Egypt—which from 571 to 568 B. C. had been in the throes of civil strife. The results of the Babylonian attack on Egypt can only be guessed, as up to the present all documents fail us. It was amid this rise and fall of empires and the ruin of the home state, with the accompanying upheaval in ethics and religion that always characterizes war periods, that our prophet spoke and wrote, suffered and hoped (593 to 570 B. C.).

THE CANON

It is well known that difficulties arose among the rabbis as to the presence of Ezekiel in the canon of Scripture. Two causes cooperated toward this hesitancy. The one grew out of the dogma of the law—generally accepted at the beginning of the Christian Era—that the law was with God before the creation of the world; that the law, that was in time, came by word of mouth to Moses, and was the same that was with God; and that there was no new law left in heaven (G. F. Moore, *Judaism* I. 268, 269). Hence, the laws were "not liable to alteration . . . they remain firm and lasting from the day on which they were first promulgated . . . no one, not even the very smallest of them was changed" (Philo Judæus III, 77, 78, *C. D. Yonge translation*). With this as the theological theory of the rabbis, any comparison of the ritual regulations in Ezekiel with parallel ones in the Pentateuch was bound to be a disturber of the peace. For example, Ezekiel 46: 6, 7 requires for the burnt-offering for the new moon, one young bullock, six lambs and a ram; and for the meal-offering an ephah for the bullock, an ephah for the ram and for the lambs according as he is able, while in Numbers 28: 11, the burnt-offering for the same occasion was to be, two bullocks, one ram and seven he-lambs; while there was required for the meal-offering, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour for each bullock, two-tenths for the one ram, and a tenth of an ephah for each lamb. How to make one equal two, six equal seven, and three-tenths equate with one was a problem for the discerning, but how to accept both of these and still adhere to the eternal unchangeableness of the Torah lay beyond human comprehension. Or again, what should they do with the regulation for a semiannual atonement for the house (Ezek. 45: 18-21), of which the Pentateuch has not the faintest glimmer; especially as after the revelation to Moses "no new law was left in heaven"? Some twenty such major problems of interpretation are raised by a comparative study of Ezekiel with the Torah. No wonder it is reported that Hananiah ben Hezekiah required three hundred jars of oil for his midnight study to arrive even at a temporary conclusion! So serious was the conflict and so many were the problems involved that it was the part of wisdom to waive final decision until Elijah should return and compose their differences (Spiegel, *Har. Theol. Rev.*, 1931, 260).

A second reason for question concerning Ezekiel lay in the speculative difficulties that grew out of the beginning of the book—the chariot of the cherubim, chapter 1. This and certain features of a neurotic nature gave rise to teaching concerning the mystery of Deity that belonged to the occult. The strange figures in chapter 1 and the stranger symbolism of later portions of the book, easily lent themselves to fantastic conclusions. While pondering these divine mysteries might be invaluable for the initiated and the mature, it might be fatal—indeed it had been—to the immature. The study of cherubim, angels and demons has always, to a certain type of mind, opened the door to fanaticism.

Hence it is striking evidence of the serious thought the great rabbis gave to the value of every part of the books they set apart for use in public worship, that they prohibited to those under thirty years of age the reading of certain parts—the beginning, the end and certain other chapters—of the book of Ezekiel.

THE TEXT

It is generally recognized that the text of Ezekiel is unusually corrupt, so much so that some parts are altogether beyond restoration. The fact is, that with the possible exception of Samuel, 1 and 2, the text of Ezekiel is the worst in the Old Testament, (Smend, *Ezechiel*, XXIX).

In addition to what a text ordinarily suffers in transmission, there is evidence that the scribes were not idle in the interpretation of the Ezekiel text. The multiplicity of conventional phrases, such as, son of man—used a hundred times, "that you may know that I am Yahweh"—found sixty times, "thus says Yahweh," oracle of Yahweh, and others—is so marked as to breed contempt rather than reverence. The perpetual recurrence of "the Lord Yahweh" borders on profanity. These and many similar phrases, all easy to repeat, testify to the scribe as well as to an original writer.

Explanatory glosses are numerous, and duplicates, or recensions, are frequently to be noted. But beyond these ordinary scribal phenomena, there is the growing conviction that the original book, written in Jerusalem, has been thoroughly worked over by an editor who was convinced that the prophet accomplished his work as a member of the exilic community. Thus the book was so explained and enlarged that it has long been accepted as the product of one of the captives of 597 B. C. Such a theory of editorial activity is novel in connection with Ezekiel, but it is a commonplace in Old Testament studies. It is generally agreed that at the beginning of the sixth century B. C. the Deuteronomic school reworked the earlier Hebrew literature and gave us their version of history. Likewise there is little dissent that two centuries later priestly editors contributed large sections to the Hexateuch, thereby not only preserving their point of view for all future generations, but establishing it as the current view of the Mosaic period for more than two millenia.

If Ezekiel passed through a similar literary process, which seems not unlikely, then the contribution of the scribes and editors was much more significant than has usually been believed. Not only so, but the unraveling of the editorial additions from the original will be revolutionary, and not an easy task. When accomplished, however, the original, like an old master that has been cleaned, will have more depth of beauty and vigor of line than the composite.

In text correction much has been achieved. Cornill's monumental work in reconstructing the Hebrew text—largely on the basis of LXX B., though LXX A. and the Targums were also drawn on—is invaluable (C. H. Cornill, *Das Buch Ezechiel*, 1886). If LXX B. is not so important as Cornill believed, nevertheless its superiority over the Hebrew in some respects has been established. Apparently it was a translation from a text that lacked many of the religious formulæ of the extant Hebrew. By way of illustration, the Hebrew has Lord Yahweh—*'Adhonai Yahweh*—217 times, while LXX B. has its equivalent only 78 times (Battersby Harford, *Studies in the Book of Ezekiel*, 112). By its aid other glosses are frequently detected and it often furnishes textual aid in difficult passages, either by its slavish rendering, or by its transliteration of unknown words.

Since Cornill's day, stimulated by his conclusions, constructive textual work has been done on the whole book by Toy, Jahn, Erlich, Rothstein, Hermann; and significant contributions have been made to textual problems by a score of others. Yet while progress toward a correct text has been made, the hoped-for goal still lies far ahead, and will not be attained until major questions in criticism are on a reasonably firm foundation. One great question is, How much of the present book did the prophet Ezekiel write?

In this volume a serious effort has been made to arrive at a text as nearly correct as possible. The above-mentioned works have been most helpful, as have been exegetes such as Hitzig, Smend, Bertholet, Hermann, and others, but personal judgment has had to decide between conflicting suggestions—of which there have been many. Frequently objective data were entirely absent and only the feel of the historic situation could determine the decision. Hence in not a few places the translation must remain hypothetical. Yet even that is not so serious as what we occasionally find in the Authorized and the Revised versions, where there is no foundation for the rendering.

The critical textual notes have been reduced to a minimum. Explanations that were self-evident to the student of Hebrew have usually been omitted. Only in a few cases has the preferred *Keri* or *Kethib*—as the case may be—been indicated. Most of the suggested readings have the support of one or more of the versions, the LXX being of the greatest service. Rarely has the originator of a conjectural form been named, because most of the approved emendations have passed into the stream of history and are public property. The writer is under tribute to all who have gone before.

The peculiar interchange of the prepositions 'al, *to*, and ʿal, *on* or *upon*—the first never used in the Aramaic—when incorrect has been regularly marked. But the word *Lord* (*adhonai*) found in the Hebrew so frequently with Yahweh, when absent from LXX B, has been bracketed in the translation, but not indicated in the critical text.

THE HISTORY OF CRITICISM

During the last century the attention of Old Testament students has turned from the Pentateuch to the Prophets, and since the publication of Redpath's Commentary, thirty years ago, the book of Ezekiel has received some of the attention it deserves. To be thus in the critical melting-pot means that every phrase comes under the keenest scrutiny; and if some prove to be dross, others will come out as gold refined. Conclusions, arrived at to date, are by no means final, but the work of thirty years has turned our *sang froid* concerning the unity and authenticity of the book into an eagerness to reach foundations that are secure. The following paragraphs give but the barest sketch of the outstanding contributions to this study.

For more than two millenia but few questions had been raised concerning values and authenticity of Ezekiel. The older rabbis had their serious discussions concerning the interpretation and use of the first chapter and the legal sections of the book, but in the early part of our era they rested their case. During the succeeding generations, a man like Jerome might confess that he was unable to enter the closed portal, or a Spinoza might doubt if the text and the order of our present Ezekiel were anything like what the prophet left, and an Ewald might question the authorship of chapters 40–48, but on the whole orthodoxy flowed on, largely unconscious of the rocks and shallows that lay beneath.

Sixty years ago, however, Klostermann started a movement that has been fruitful in Ezekiel criticism. In 1877 he published a study suggesting that the prophet suffered from some form of catalepsy; seeking thus on a scientific basis to account for his dumbness, his visions, his second sight and his symbolic actions. (*Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1877, 391-439). The immediate reaction was not so important as might have been expected, but ultimately its effect was felt in both biblical and theological studies.

Outside the field of textual criticism, in which Cornill made his notable contribution in 1886, and sporadic suggestions that the book was not Babylonian, nor a unit, nor authentic, no important work was done for more than thirty years. With the opening of the century, Kraetzschmar proposed the theory that two recensions of the book, one in the first person and the other in the third, had been united in our present Ezekiel. Hence he sought to explain much of the verboseness and wearisome repetition, with which the book is cumbered, as doublets (*Das Buch Ezechiel*, 1900). This theory, advocated and developed by Budde, who corrected some of its untenable contentions, aided in clearing up some very apparent difficulties in the book. More important still it roused a fair number of scholars from the traditional complacency. Jahn, some five years later, vigorously combated the theory, but had to admit not only the doublets, but that many scribal glosses had found their way into the present text (*Das Buch Ezechiel*, 1905).

In 1902 Hugo Winckler contributed to the growing agitation by asserting that Ezekiel, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, is a compilation of many oracles, coming from different periods but dated from the Persian (*Altorientalische Forschungen* III, 135-155).

Hermann, in his *Ezechiel Studien* (1908), and again in his *Kommentar zum Alten Testament* (1924), summed up the scholarship to date. He disposed of the two recension theory, but accepted not a few passages as duplicates. In his own way he carried forward Winckler's theory of composite authorship. He believed that the prophet himself was the editor, and that from time to time he gathered together, revised and edited his prophetic messages; and brought them into final form. He supplied some chronological notations, but the arrangement of material was controlled by preaching values, not by chronological sequence. Thus the final form sometimes had duplicates, and ofttimes was out of its historical connection. He further concedes that, as always, the editorial activity of later days, by way of interpretation and elaboration, added a considerable quota. This, he held, is especially noticeable in chapters 40–48. He even finds definite evidence of scribal additions after the time of the Septuagint translation. His work is scholarly to a degree, evaluating literary quality and contents adequately, and he admits that if the above theory does not hold, then much more of the book than he has admitted must have come from later hands (Hermann, *Ezechiel*, XXIII; XXXIV).

The above studies prepared the way for the deluge. Hölscher, in 1924, published *Hesekiel, der Dichter und das Buch.* The title, "The Poet and the Book," is the key to the author's conclusions. Ezekiel, the wearisome, prolix scribe, was a poet. This idea was revolutionary. For centuries it had been said, "He is the most uniformly prosaic of the earlier prophets" (Driver, L.O.T., 296), and, "He was prosaic even when he wrote poetry" (Bewer, *Literature of the Old Testament*, 183). But now emancipated from the thrall of the book's unity, by drastic critical analysis, poems of no inferior quality appear. Hölscher has proved his claim. Testing the suggestions made by his predecessors, profiting by conclusions arrived at in kindred studies, patiently sifting literary criteria, and building on the textual work of Cornill, Toy, and others, he has uncovered some twenty-one brief passages, sixteen of them in poetic form—in all less than 170 verses—which he believes come from the poet Ezekiel, who lived in Babylonia during the Exilic period. Later, after the Egyptian expedition of Cambyses (528-525 B. C.), and after the rebuilding of the second temple (516) but before the time of Nehemiah, that is, between 500 and 450 B. C., a Levitically-minded writer, imitating the peculiar style of the poet-prophet, greatly enlarged and edited this book of poems. This is essentially our Ezekiel.

Naturally, pioneering work so drastic as this has met with stiff opposition. Hölscher makes no claim to finality. Indeed he is emphatic that with our corrupt text there never can be an absolutely accurate reconstruction of the original. But two results accrue from this radical work. One is the recognition that Ezekiel was a poet of no mean order. Kittel, most cautious of scholars of the last generation, after quoting with approval Hölscher's translation of two poems, 19: 2-6, 8, 9, and 27: 2-9a, 25, says: *Diese beiden Klagelieder das Werk eines echten Dichters sind. Sie können sich mit dem Besten messen, was wir an hebräicher Dichtung haben* (Kittel G.V.I., 3, p. 159). That Kittel should class these poems with the best we have in Hebrew verse is high praise; but here he calls a halt. That a poet should be limited to one pattern in rhythm, that he should never fall below the lofty level of his highest flights, or never limp along in halting prose, is not confirmed by any literary study. Kittel, however, holds that much of the problematic and abnormal element may be accounted for by the tragic times and the two worlds in which the prophet lived. He had *Zwei Seelen in seiner Brust;* a double personality.

This study has made a second contribution, in that it has marked out for students what might be termed the irreducible minimum of the original prophet. If these foundations cannot be shaken, we have that on which we can build. Hölscher's original Ezekiel is as follows: 1: 1b, 2, 4, 28; 2: 8b-10; 3: 2, 10-12, 14, 15, 24b; 4: 1, 2, 9a, 10, 11; 5: 1, 2, 5, 6a, 8, 9, 12ab, 14, 15; 8: 1-3, 5-7a, 9-17; 9: 1-7, 11; 11: 24, 25; 15: 2-5; 16: 3ab, 12, 15, 24, 25; 17: 1-9; 19: 1-6, 7b-9; 21: 14b, 15b, 16, 19-21; 23: 2-6, 11, 14-17, 19, 20, 22-25, 27; 24: 3b-5, 16, 17; 27: 3b-9a, 25b-36; 28: 11-19; 29: 3ab-15a, 17-21; 30: 21; 31: 3, 4, 6-8; 32: 2, 18, 19, 22-24, 26, 27.

These, in all less than 170 verses and part verses out of a total of 1,272, in the present book, have survived the critical test of Hölscher's standard.

Contemporaneous with the above developments was a divergent one that called in question the authenticity of parts or all of the book. Zunz as early as 1832, and more emphatically in 1873, announced his conviction that Ezekiel was the fictitious name of a writer who belonged to the Nehemiah period, 440–400 B. C.; that the oracles against Tyre seemed to reflect the attack of Alexander the Great; and that the arrangement, many additions, and dates, were due to an editor (Z. D. M. G. 27, 676-684).

Seincke, influenced by Zunz, in 1857, and again in 1876, supported the hypothesis that the book is a pseudepigraph. With much detailed evidence he concluded that Gog is Antiochus Epiphanes, and by the conjunction of dates—adding 390 to 40 (4: 5, 6), and subtracting the result 430 from 593 B. C., the date of 1: 1-3—he found to his own satisfaction, conclusive evidence that the book had been written in

163 B. C., and hence is, as all the other features indicated, Maccabean (Seincke *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* I, 138). This was taken seriously by at least one of the erudite rabbis.

Winckler, in 1898, with stinging sarcasm implied that the dogma of the unity of the book has no support; that chapters thirty-eight and thirty-nine are an appendage; that Gog is none other than Alexander; and hence that this and other parts of the book had no relation to Babylonia, but were messages to Palestinian Jews (*Altorientalische Forschungen, Zweite Reihe* I, pp. 160-171). A year or two later Nathaniel Schmidt, in an article on Scythians, suggested that Gog is Mithradates VI, and that these chapters were written in 88 B. C. and were Palestinian (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, " Scythian "). Thus an important group not only challenged the unity and authenticity of the book; but its Babylonian origin and its whole chronological system were repudiated. These theories were largely ignored, yet sometimes met with rebuttal. The question remained, however, were they will-o-the-wisps, or founded in fact?

Within recent years two important contributions, each entirely independent of the other, differing greatly in some respects yet agreeing in others, have given impetus and direction to Ezekiel studies.

James Smith of Aberdeen, disturbed by the variety of conflicting views concerning the book, attempted a study *de novo*, and in 1931 published his findings (J. Smith, *The Book of Ezekiel*). They were to the following effect: That the first book was a product of the days of Manasseh (684–641); that most of it was written in Palestine; that the author was a northerner; that a second part was written by someone —probably the same writer as that of the first part—living among a community of exiles; that an editor so arranged and added to the material and so manipulated the dates that originally referred to the northern captivity in 722 that the whole was made to harmonize with the captivity of Jerusalem in 597; and thus the book appears to be the product of a prophet of the exile. Smith was able to find only three passages, 20: 32-34; 36: 16-32; and 37: 11-14, that with any degree of certainty can be accepted as addressed to an exilic community.

While Smith's volume was in the press there appeared *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy*, by C. C. Torrey of Yale University. This was the last word for which there had been long preparation. As early as 1909 the general conclusions of the author had been published (*Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. XV, 1909, 248). The conclusion of a dissertation, presented in 1925 to the faculty of the Graduate School of Yale University in candidacy for the degree of doctor of philosophy, by Millar Burrows, was: the view of Ezekiel as a product of the late pre-Maccabean period is not only possible, but very probable. Behind this judgment there lay a great deal of patient, critical work, and sound judgment that indicated the necessity of a thorough reworking of the whole problem. Pseudo-Ezekiel presents the following conclusions. The book of Ezekiel is a pseudepigraph, written after 240 and before 180 B. C.; built on and elaborating 2 Kings 21: 2-16 —the account of the reign of Manasseh and its consequences—and purports to come from the thirtieth year of the reign of that monarch. The book was written in Palestine, and is a unit, save the slight work of an editor, who manipulated the dates to make the book read as of the exile, and made some eighteen minor changes and additions that made it look like the product of an exile in Babylon. That is, the dates in part and the phrases that are peculiarly Babylonian are all scribal. All the rest is a unit and is Palestinian. It was inevitable that a storm of protest should arise over this declaration. The most important reactions have been those of Budde

(J. B. L., 1931, Part II. 20-41); Battersby Harford, in *Expository Times*, Oct., 1931, 20-25, and again in *Studies in the Book of Ezekiel* in 1935, 21-27, 38-53; S. Spiegel, in *Harvard Theological Review*, Oct., 1931, 245-321, which provides a wealth of historical material; and Herntrich in *Ezechielprobleme* (1932). This last treatment of the problems connected with the book of Ezekiel, though brief, gathers up much of the valuable critical work to date, and probably points the direction in which such studies will tend for some time.

Herntrich has been influenced by the best that preceded him. Convinced by Hölscher, he recognizes the poetry in the book, but drastic stylistic limits are not accepted, hence a large part of the prose is credited to Ezekiel. With Torrey and an increasing number of scholars he recognizes that the original work must have originated in Palestine; but he supports authenticity, and considers the contribution of the prophet closed by 586, or shortly after. He finds evidence that a Babylonian editor, probably a disciple of Ezekiel, reworked the original into an exilic framework, contributing large sections, such as chapters 1, 9, 10, 25-32, and 40-48, and small sections, such as 2: 1-5; 3: 10-16a; 8: 2-4; 24: 25, 26; 33: 21-23.

He concludes that Ezekiel, a prophet in Jerusalem, delivered the following messages to his townsmen during the years 593–586 B. C. Editorial glosses are not indicated in the following:

3 : 22, 23a; 2 : 6-3 : 9; 4 : 1-3, 9-17; 5 : 1-4; 6 : 1-7; 7 : 1-4, 12, 13, 14-27; 8 : 1, 5-18; 11 : 1-13, 14-21; 12 : 1-11, 12-15, 17-20, 21-25; 13 : 1-8, 10, 12-15, 17-27; 14: 1-8 (9-11?); 15: 1-7; 16: 1-43; 17: 1-21; 18: 1-31; 19: 1-9 (10-14?); 20: 1-32; 20: 45–21: 32 (English versification); 22: 1-22 (23-29?), 30, 31; 23: 1-35; 24: 1-14, 15-23; 33: 1-9, 10-17, 23-29; 34: 1-16, 17-22, 23, 24; 36: 1-15, 16-21; 37: 1-11, 12-14, 15-19; 38: 1–39: 29 (apart from 38: 17 and 39: 11-16, may be the work of Ezekiel in Babylon after 586 B. C.). (Herntrich, *Ezechielprobleme* 73-119.)

CHRONOLOGY

It is noteworthy that not only does the arrangement of the book seem orderly, but it is furnished with a series of dates that ostensibly gives us the year, month and day for all the messages. This chronological scheme begins with 1: 1-3, which marks the opening of the ministry of the prophet, and extends through to 40: 1, which introduces the concluding booklet, 40: 1–48: 35. In all, there are fifteen such references. Thirteen give the year and usually the day and the month, while two provide material for reckoning between dates (3: 15, 16; 4: 5, 6), and two others have a double dating system (1: 1-3; 40: 1). The Babylonian year, that began in the spring, March-April, was used throughout by the editor. Though noted for their amazing astronomical knowledge (having figured out the course of the stars so accurately that in 1800 years they were out only one day), in practical affairs the Babylonians were behind the times. Their working chronology was controlled by the rise and fall of dynasties rather than by astronomical knowledge, and the lunar took precedence over the siderial year. So their documentation was always in a state of flux, and to transfer their chronology to ours cannot be done with absolute accuracy. The day of the month cannot be indicated with any certainty, and the month itself is often in doubt. In practice the Babylonians made use of various systems, according to place and period. The lunar year of 354 days, twelve months with alternately thirty and twenty-nine days, was the basis of their practice. But a 360 day year—a compromise between the 354 day lunar year and the 365 day solar year

—was popular. In either case they were always behind time and had to introduce an intercalary month, in the one case every two or three years, in the other every five or six. Hence they were always sporadically catching up with astronomical time. So days and months can rarely ever be accurate, and with the year, we can make but a close approximation.

Then too, as our year begins with the winter solstice and theirs began with the vernal equinox, our year dates must always straddle theirs. For instance, the ninth month of any of their years roughly, would be our December, while their tenth month of the same year would be the January of our following year. The chart below follows the Hebrew text; where the Septuagint has a different rendering it is placed in brackets. The scheme is clear-cut, and at least to a superficial glance, impressive.

	The Day	*The Month*	*The Year*	*Date*	*B. C.*
1: 1-3	5	4	5	July	593
3: 15, 16	12	4	5	July	593
4: 5, 6	390	days later		August	592
8: 1	5	6 (5 LXX)	6	August	592
20: 1	10	5	7	August	591
24: 1	10	10	9	January	588
26: 1	1		11		586
29: 1	12	10	10 (12 LXX)	January	587
29: 17	1	1	27	April	570
30: 20	7	1	11	April	587
31: 1	1	3	11	June	587
32: 1	1	12 (10 LXX)	12	March	585
32: 17	15	(1 LXX)	12		585
33: 21	5	10 (12 LXX)	12	January	585
40: 1	10	Beginning	25	?April	572

There is but little disorder in this array of dates. Twice the month is absent (26: 1; 32: 17), without serious loss, and easily accounted for by the unavoidable slips of scribal activity. In two cases the natural chronological order is disturbed. April, 570 B. C., the latest date in the book, is slipped in before a series of the year 587. For this there is no good reason, and 30: 1-19 is left without any suggestion of date. A preferable place would have been after 28: 19 or preceding 29: 1. Also in three cases a later date precedes an earlier one: 8: 1; 26: 1; and 32: 1. The Septuagint in 8: 1 and 32: 1—note also 33: 21—has in each case the number of the month in correct sequence. It also has a different reading for the year in 29: 1, which is no improvement, and the month is added in 32: 17. There are a few other variations in the Greek, some of which like the above show evidence of interest in a correct sequence of dates; others may be due to slips of the pen.

These irregularities, however, are but a small fraction of the whole, and are quite undisturbing. It has been all but universally accepted, that in general, they are accurate for each and every part of the book. For more than a century the student felt the critical tides ebb and flow around the Pentateuch, and now for half a century criticism has turned toward the Prophets. But this book has offered the vantage-ground of undisputed unity and convincing chronology. In a stormy sea it was a landmark, a lighthouse from which we could always take our bearings. As late as 1907 an English scholar of repute wrote: " Scarcely any doubt has ever been cast, even by the extremest critics, upon the unity and authenticity of the book. It does not, therefore, present such problems for discussion as many other books offer." (H. A. Redpath, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, XIV.) But the more recent history of criticism speaks in different accents. A critical examination into the chief facts in the chronological system just presented will be instructive. A summary of the important findings is here presented.

First, the superscriptions were intended to date the material in each and every part of the book of Ezekiel, and are the product of careful arrangement and intelligent purpose. This, the traditional view, is sustained by a detailed study of the whole scheme.

An interpretation of the chronological notes (3: 15, 16; 4: 5, 6) that intervene between 1: 1-3 and 8: 1—notes that have caused endless difficulty—convinces one that these have a definite bearing on the time element in the book. The second (4: 5, 6), it is true, provides us with symbolism that suggests the duration of the exile. But by no interpretation, nor by juggling the *post quem* and the *ad quem* dates, can it be made to work. Their knowledge of the dates of history was wabbly. But apart from any suggestion as to the period of the exile, as an effort to bridge the dates, preceding and following, it is a close fit. The seven days of 3: 15, 16, and the 390 of 4: 5, with which the forty of 4: 6 must be coterminous, give us 397 in all. This is, if we use the solar year, one year, one month and a day. If we read, with the Septuagint, in 8: 1 the fifth month in place of the sixth of the Hebrew, we then have the lacunæ between 1: 1-3 and 8: 1, inclusive of both dates, filled in perfectly. Even if we hold the sixth month of the Hebrew, remembering the vacillating nature of the Babylonian year, with their compromise year of 360 days, and their lunar year of 354, with the frequent insertion of an intercalary month at very irregular intervals —we could scarcely convince an ancient scribe of inaccuracy. We have not enough material at hand to be sure that there had not been an intercalary month juggled into the year scheme during this period. It points to a comprehensive scheme of dates.

Likewise all the remaining dates link up one with the other. The story of the dumbness of the prophet, which runs through a number of sections, and which seems to be unrelated to actual life, is, nevertheless, carefully related to the dates in the superscriptions (cf. 3: 25-27; 24: 27; 29: 21; 33: 21, 22; and Com. *in loco*). In addition to this, we find occasionally a definite historical reference, which is immediately seized on and used by the superscription (cf. 24: 1, 2; 29: 17). Beyond this there is much in the historical background that justifies, for at least a number of the oracles, the date assigned to each section. Thus there is substantial evidence, not to a haphazard piece of work, but to a well-organized, carefully wrought out system.

A second conclusion is that these superscriptions are actually editorial addenda, and not integral parts of the messages. This is a commonplace of biblical study. A sermon is not ordinarily prefaced by a date, nor does a chronological scheme introduce a poem. Such notation belongs to the keepers of archives and the publishers of books.

These dates, by their lack of relation with much of the content of the chapters they introduce, prove their independence. Without drawing on section 1: 4–7: 27, much of the cogent material of which will later be reviewed, we note only certain features, in the large, in the following sections. Almost a dozen curses against Tyre, chapters 26–28, are dated as of 586 B. C. A score of denunciations and predictions against Egypt, chapters 29–32, are bunched, chiefly in 587. Seven chapters, 33–39, with a reconstruction program, each part of which begins, "The word of Yahweh came to me" or its equivalent, are presented as the product of the fifth day of the tenth month of 585, and then nine chapters, 40–48, the detailed organization of the new community, come as a vision on the new year day in 572. A moment's thought convinces us that this is not the way either man or God works. The superscriptions then give no final indications of origin or development of many of the messages, and hold but a formal relation with the contents (cf. 33: 21, 22).

A third important conclusion is, that the superscriptions have within themselves a coherence, with definite literary and theological features that separate them from the body of the book.

They are distinctly Babylonian. The dating system is indicative of this. Babylonia, and even more so her predecessor Assyria, had long been noted for her accurate documentation of historical records. This influence is noticed in the editorial framework of the books of Kings and Judges, which probably was exilic. The same system, but more complete, dominates Ezekiel. Two features are noticeable. The months are numbered and not named. The earlier Hebrew system, borrowed from the Canaanites, named the months, chiefly on an agricultural basis, but none of these are used here. The Babylonians also had names for their months, but they were mostly the names of deities. The Hebrew scribes, most of whom were related to the priesthood, apparently intolerant of the least appearance of idolatry of a foreign type, at an early date in the exilic or post-exilic period, devised the simple method of designating the months by numbers. These dates, then, furnish evidence not only of Babylonian culture but also of Hebrew religion.

The other Babylonian feature is the use of the Babylonian year, which began in the spring, and not in the autumn as did the Canaanite-Hebrew calender. The first month of the year is found usually within the March–April month of our calendar.

The Babylonian leanings of the scribe are also revealed by some of the characteristic words and phrases. Reference is made to the river, or *canal Chebar*, in 1: 1, 3; 3: 15, and only in the closely related passages 3: 28; 10: 15, 20, 22; 43: 3. This is in contrast to the major part of the book which centers around Jerusalem and Palestine (cf. Introd., xx, xxi). The *captivity* is also characteristic of these brief introductory formulæ. Reference to it is found in 1: 1, 2, 3; 3: 15; 40: 1; and beyond these save where captivity is threatened (12: 4; 25: 3) only in apparent interpolations (cf. 33: 21; 11: 24, 25; 12: 11). To this may be added the selfsame day, —'eth ‘etzem hayyôm—, in 2: 3; 24: 2; 40: 1, which apart from these cases is found only in the P. document (Lev. 23, 21, 28, 29, 30; Exod. 12: 17, 41), an indication of a date not earlier than 500 B. C.

Characteristic of these superscriptions also is such a significant theological phrase as, *the hand of Yahweh was upon me there*, with a few insignificant variations (1: 3; 3: 14; 8: 1; 33: 22; 40: 1; cf. 3: 22; 37: 1). This phrase is so frequently found in these notes, and outside of them only in passages otherwise suspicious, that we may venture to believe it is an idiom of the editor that gives us an insight into his theological views. He probably thought Ezekiel had ecstatic experiences which were the explanation of some of the strange symbolism of the book. Along the same line are the phrases, the *heavens were opened* (1: 1) and I *saw visions* (1: 1; 8: 2; 43: 3) and *visions of God* (1: 1; 8: 3; 11: 24; 40: 2).

Concerning these superscriptions the conclusion would be that they are the work of an editor, who either lived in Babylonia among the captives, or was strongly influenced by them. This then is a framework into which the original book has been pressed, and which gives the whole book a Babylonian outlook.

Another conclusion, the fourth—a corollary to the above—is that these booklets are in no case units. All are composite, with much lack of sequence; and not a few of the oracles lie entirely outside the range of the superscription.

Scrutiny of the contents of any part of the book indicates that neither is there a real sequence of events, nor is any date accurate for all the oracles in the section. The first part of the first division may be used to illustrate. If we read this as consecutive material, giving the call and commission of the prophet, it looks as though he must have had at least five different experiences, each thrusting him out on his prophetic mission. The first is in 1: 3, 28; 2: 1-3. Here the hand of Yahweh was on him; he fell on his face; the spirit entered into him; and Yahweh told him to go to the children of Israel who had rebelled against him. Within this material there are wearying repetitions that belong to the analysis of the chapter. But the second commission, 2: 8–3: 7, follows hard on the heels of the first. He is given a roll on which were written lamentations, mournings and woe. He eats this and is told he must go to the rebellious house of Israel. No wonder it was bitter to his taste. The second charge is scarcely digested when the third, which has as little connection with the second as the second with the first, is given (3: 10-14). He is enjoined to listen and receive all the words of Yahweh in his heart, and go and speak to the captivity. Then the spirit lifted him up; and he heard the rush of wings; and he was lifted up and came to the captivity, by the river Chebar; and was dazed for seven days.

But the end of his initiation is not yet. The fourth commission, differing from all previous ones, makes him a watchman to the house of Israel (3: 16-21), still spoken of as rebellious. The fifth (3: 22-27) is as significant as any of those preceding. Yahweh tells him to go to the valley; and there the spirit enters him; and he is ordered to shut himself within his house; and is told he will be dumb, for he is sent to a rebellious house.

From any point of view this is complex and perplexing. The call of an Isaiah or a Jeremiah was clearly reported in a few verses; here are sixty-one, and confusion reigns. Not only is it complex, but there are conflicting elements. The rebellious house is no doubt the same as the house of Israel (2: 3-7; 3: 7-9; 3: 26), but the captives, or the children of the captivity (1: 1; 3: 10, 15), who were by the river Chebar, and are never spoken of as rebellious, are not this group.

These five commissions, so divergent as to method and message, with prospective audiences so widely separated, were scarcely crowded into seven days (3: 15, 16), or even into a year, the period covered by 1: 1-3. Even the interpretation that none of the book was written until late in the life of the prophet, who then naturally telescoped the original with later developments, hardly solves these incongruities (Buttenweiser, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, VII, 1-18). There is literary reworking no doubt, but we seem to have two minds as well as two writers at work. The traces of the editor are found in the message to the captivity. But beyond any question is the fact that these three chapters have only a superficial unity; they are composite.

Further illustrations of this lie on every side. With the recognition that there has been much editorial activity, a serious effort must be made to analyze each section of the book into its component parts. The exposition of this belongs to another division of the Introduction. But as illustrative of the composite character of parts of Ezekiel a short study of 3: 22, 23 will be useful. These verses have no connection with what precedes. The word *there*, which reaches back for an antecedent, hangs in the air. It is absent from the Septuagint, either because it was not in the original text, which is most likely, or because the translators recognized the syntactical difficulty. The word *valley*, or better *gorge*—derived from the root "to cleave," or "to break open"—is some location that has not previously been mentioned. It has no relation to Chebar or Tel-abib, as it is not appropriate to the Mesopotamia plain, which is not a gorge; it bespeaks a Palestinian locality, though the exact place is unknown. The translation in the A. V. and the R. V., "plain," was an effort to harmonize this and other passages with Babylonian topography (1: 3; 3: 15, 23). It is again met in 8: 4 and 37: 1, where, at least in the first instance, and most probably in the second, it certainly belongs to Palestine. Further, we notice that 23b is composed entirely of phrases that are the peculiar property of the superscriptions, "the glory of Yahweh"; "the glory which he saw"; "by the river Chebar"; "I fell on my face." This speaks loudly of the editor. It then seems that 22b, 23a constitute an entirely independent piece, that has become imbedded in material quite foreign to it. Herntrich has done great service to this booklet in drawing most of the above facts to our attention (cf. Introd., and Com.).

Another important illustration may be noted. Chapter 4 has always given the interpreter difficulties, but recently the perplexity has been resolved by the searching work of the critic. It is now apparent that here two themes have been interwoven, the siege of the city, and the duration of the siege. The siege is portrayed in 4: 1-3, 9a, 10, 11, 16, 17, and this gives a coherent story; while the period of the exile is outlined in 4: 4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15 (Hermann, Com., 31). It is evident that these two came from entirely different periods, and that the superscription fails to meet the needs of at least one of them. Many other sections might be quoted as evidence of the composite nature of every part of the book, but such will be found in a later part of the Introduction and in the Commentary. What is true of one section is true of all. And, long tradition to the contrary, the book of Ezekiel apparently came into being in much the same way as Isaiah or Jeremiah; each was the result of a process, and may be termed a library rather than a book. Again, while the critical process will disturb long-sanctioned dogmas, it will bring to life long-forgotten words, and rediscover long-lost messages.

The most important question of all remains to be answered. If these dates are all editorial and late, how accurate are they? This can be determined only by comprehensive study of all parts of the book, in the light of history. In part, the question has already been answered; they have only a general relation to the booklets, and are inaccurate for some of the subsumed material. If the valley of 3: 22b and the canal Chebar of 1: 3, 3: 15 are mutually exclusive, it would be strange indeed if 1: 1-3 could be applicable to the commission to the captives, in 3: 10-16a, and at the same time to the commission to Jerusalem in 2: 3-7. Such omnipresence on the part of a prophet belongs to the realm of fiction. Long ago A. B. Davidson wrote, "The dates throughout the book are little more than rubrics" (Ezekiel, *Cambridge Bible*, 238).

Still the question remains, are the dates valid for any part of the book, even in a general way? Not a few immediately reply in the negative. Scholars of yesterday, Zunz, Geiger, Steincke, and pioneers of today, Torrey, Smith, Schmidt, Kuhl, Burrows, and Berry, seriously question the whole scheme as it now reads; and that not without cause. Space prohibits a review of the evidence submitted by these scholars, but one fact seems inescapable, namely, that many of the messages in chapters 1 to 24 were delivered in person to the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah, in a time of siege, threatened and actual, for which the most likely dates are 590–586 (cf. 17: 1-21;

19: 1-14; 24: 2-24; 4: 1-3, *et al*). Had no date been furnished, the historian would have chosen this as the most likely time for the major number of these oracles. Hence, while either in whole or in part they are the work of an editor who had a very definite objective in mind, it would seem that the superscriptions accurately determine the bounds not only of the major part of chapters 1 to 24, but also of much of chapters 25 to 37 as well (N. B. 29: 17-20). That is, the span of Ezekiel's public activity came within the dates 593–570 B. C. Around this were gathered the contributions of the Babylonian editor, between 520 and 500. Later some important material was interpolated.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF CHAPTERS 40–48

Students of Ezekiel have long recognized the marked differences between this section and the preceding chapters, both in language and ideas. The old theme was impending ruin, the new one is reconstruction—which naturally demands a new vocabulary.

Early studies, assuming that Ezekiel was the author, noted remarkable similarities between this and the Holiness Code (Lev. 17–26), with the conclusion that the prophet was the author of both. But so grave were the difficulties in both vocabulary and ritual that the theory of unity of authorship was soon abandoned. But this criticism had far-reaching consequences in that it furnished evidence not only of the differences between Leviticus 17–26 and Ezekiel 40–48, but also showed that neither of these was in itself a unit.

Later critical studies in the Septuagint, especially those of Thackeray and Hermann, have thrown light on the relation of this section with the earlier chapters of the book. As a result of minute lexicographical and grammatical investigations, both scholars have concluded that the translator of 40–48 was not the same as that of the immediately preceding chapters (St. J. Thackeray, *Jour. Th. Std.*, IV, 1903, 409; Hermann, *A. T. Studien*, 86, 87). To this is added the recent verdict of J. Battersby Harford, who from a study of the names for Deity as used in the Hebrew and the Greek has concluded that 40–48 may have had originally a separate existence, and been independently revised before the translation of the whole book (Harford, *Studies*, 120-125).

Parallel with these studies has arisen the question of the unity of chapters 1–39. Examination of the superscriptions has shown that their relation to the content is at most superficial. In no place is this lack of connection more apparent than in 40: 1-3. The result is that today many who are slow to follow the critical trend in respect to chapters 1–39, have little hesitancy in believing that Ezekiel's relation to 40–48 is slight. With the recognition that the superscriptions are editorial and that 40: 1-3 is not an integral part of the book, the question of authorship becomes an open one.

The differences between the two sections seem incompatible with unity of authorship. It is true the intervening tragedy—royalty degraded and slain, temple in ruins, city reduced to ashes—called for a new message, in a new vocabulary. But it should be noted that the break between the old and the new was in process from 597 to 586 B. C., and Ezekiel's lines of reconstruction were, in part, projected before 586 B. C., and are continued in chapters 33–39 over a period of a decade and a half.

The reconstruction outlook is vastly different in the early part of the book from that of the later. In Ezekiel there is a tinge of apocalypticism, but it is primitive (cf.

7: 2-11); in the new program (40–48) there are apocalyptic features—the river of life (47: 1-12), the four-square city with the twelve gates (48: 8-22, 30-33)—but all of it comes under a different category, and no trace of the earlier is found. In Ezekiel "my servant David" is to be the shepherd of my people under Yahweh (34: 23, 24; 37: 24, 25); but in this section he has disappeared from the picture, and the prince, a pale shadow of an honored office, moves across the stage in none but priestly function. Likewise the return of the captives to their possessions—a hope of the prophet (14: 12-20; 33: 24-29; 37: 15-28; 39: 25-27)—is no part of this new scheme of land division.

Most important of all is the divergence of essential ideals. Ezekiel is the exponent of individualism and finds salvation in the new heart; this writer is an institutionalist, and finds the organization of community life essential to welfare. To him the differences between the clean and the unclean are essential; and as the infection of sin spreads by material contact, salvation is accomplished by the cleansing values of correct ritual. Could the mystic, who found eternal values in the new heart, believe that Yahweh might be shut up in a walled cubicle—the most holy place—and that people should be hindered from approaching him by gates triply-barred and platoons of somber-garbed priests? These two lie at the extreme poles of religious thought, and seem to be mutually exclusive.

In 40–48, while we find the Babylonian editor at work, there are no infallible traces of Ezekiel. A few of the old phrases, mortal man, rebellious house, and uncircumcised, are found in isolated fragments. The demand to preserve intact the ancestral possessions might have come from Ezekiel, in the interest of the captives (46: 16-18). The stream of the water of life might be a companion picture of the valley of dry bones (47: 1-12; cf. 37: 1-6); but these are isolated from the tenor of the whole. The body of the book (40–48) is the labor of the priest and not of the prophet. In but one thing, yet that the most important, do both agree, namely that Yahweh himself is the only ultimate source of salvation.

The following summary of sources and literary activity is in broad lines, and for practical purposes. The Babylonian editor fused together two sources, A and B, each with definite characteristics and priestly attitudes, along with some small independent fragments, into his own mold of thought. It is doubtful if he was the author of either of these. A has marked similarities with H. C., and it is possible that numerous other fragments of ritual may have been extant by the middle of the sixth century, B. C.

A source has an interest in the sin-offering and the guilt-offering, the Zadokites, the prince, and the administration of the affairs of the temple. It consists of 40: 5–42: 20; 44: 10-14, 15-19, 7-9; 45: 18–46: 10; 46: 19-23.

B source, while interested in the temple, has a wider horizon, taking in the boundaries and the tribal relationships. This material is: 47: 13-20; 48: 1-7, 23-29, 30-35. 48: 8-22 (cf. 45: 1-8) is out of place, and may come from a different source. On any count it is later than A. The differences between A and B are noted in the analysis.

C source, small independent fragments that were woven into the fabric are 45: 9, 10, 11; 46: 16-18; 47: 1-12.

The Babylonian editor, using the above sources, contributed the framework and thereby the interpretation. From his hand came: 40: 1-4; 43: 1-12, and 44: 4b-6.

It is probable that at a still later date, a priestly writer inserted 43: 13-27; 44: 1-3 (though this may come from B); 44: 20-31; 45: 13-17, and 46: 13-15. Glosses continued in this, as in the earlier chapters, until after the time of the Greek translation.

Only within wide margins can the dates for the different materials be determined. A and B may have come from different areas, or different periods, and probably each embodies a process. Both, however, follow the reform of 621 B. C., as is assured by the division between priests and Levites. Further, the reconstruction program presupposes the captivity and the fall of the city in 586 B. C.; and the place occupied by the prince, found in both, suggests, unless these passages are interpolations, that the hope of the kingdom was past. This pushes us up to, or beyond, 520–516 B. C. This is sustained by the important part played by the sin and the guilt-offerings, which at least indirectly, reveal Babylonian influence. Neither of these was known in the earlier literature, and both are of extreme importance in priestly literature (Lev. 5, 7, 14). Further testimony to the same date comes from the Hebrew word *Minchah* used for meal-offering. In the pre-exilic period it is in general use for any gift or offering; here and later it is the specific term for meal- or cereal-offering (cf. Exod. 30: 9; 40: 29; Lev. 7: 37; 23: 37; Num. 18: 9).

On the other hand the day of the atonement—or here two days (45: 18-20)—is a new adventure, followed only in part in later days; the daily burnt-offering is required only for the morning, while a later time added an evening sacrifice as well. The division of the priesthood into only two grades, and the absence of a high priest, clearly indicate that this was an *interim* legislation that preceded the priestly movement of 400 B. C. That is, this booklet is between 586 and 400, or midway between D and P; or, within narrower limits, between 540 and 500, and may be a reaction from the Zerubbabel catastrophe of 516. If this be correct, the Babylonian editor must have done his work within a few decades of that tragedy; which is in agreement with his ideals and vocabulary.

EZEKIEL, THE MAN

Like Hosea, nothing is known of Ezekiel, save what may be learned from the book bearing his name. Contemporaries never mentioned him, history said nothing about him, and so far as we know disciples never raised to him any memorial. At this we are not surprised, for our documents are meager; and the unnamed great are more numerous than the recorded heroes.

The name Ezechiel, so the Vulgate wrote it, combines the word for God with the imperfect of the verb "to be strong," and signifies "God is strong"; that is as a defender or protector. The fact that his name was compounded with that of Deity, proclaims him of religious and probably aristocratic ancestry.

The book furnishes but little material information about him. He had a private home, to which some of the older and more important men of the country occasionally came to inquire the will of Yahweh (14: 1; 20: 1; cf. 8: 1, probably late). This implies that he had at least a local reputation as a prophet; which is corroborated by the statement that he spoke in parables (20: 49), and the allusion to his popularity as a preacher, which may be traditional (33: 30-33).

But of his home life nothing is known. The "desire of your eyes" (24: 16; cf. 21a) was a reference to the temple in Jerusalem, and verses 18 and 21b, that, due to a misunderstanding of verse 16, speak of his wife and children, give us no information of value.

From the content of the major part of chapters 1–24, we may conclude that he lived in or near Jerusalem (cf. 12:1-7). His ministry was definitely to the citizens of Jerusalem and the house of Israel, or Judah (4:3; 5:5; 7:2-27; 12:11; 21:18-27), terms almost synonymous in this book (cf. Harford, *Studies*, 77-101). He was familiar with the city, and knew the abominable practices that were going on in the temple (8:5-17; 11:1-13). The chief men of the city were not strangers to him (11:1, 13; 8:11); he was able to form a shrewd estimate of the rulers of Jerusalem, and the part they played in international activities was within his ken (19:2-14). This is in agreement with the rabbinical tradition that asserts that his prophetic career began in the Holy Land (Spiegel, J. B. L., 1935, 170); though not credited by the superscriptions, the work of an editor (cf. 1:1-3; 3:15, 23b; 8:3; 11:24, 25). While most if not all of his ministry was in Jerusalem, it is not certain that he was a native of the city, or even of Judah. A fair case can be made out for him as a Northerner.

A noticeable feature of the book is the author's amazing knowledge of, and interest in Tyre, her mythology, ship-building, and commerce (26:1–28:19, in large part). The impression is that he had definite contacts with the far-famed seaport. Nor does this seem foreign to the rest of the book, for phrases that smack of the sea, as "spread my net upon him," "catch him with hooks," are among his favorites (12:13; 19:8, 9; 17:20; 32:3; 29:4). The peculiar references to Edom, occupying North and South (35:10), and to Samaria, and Sodom, and their relation to Jerusalem, along with the statement that Edom dreamed of occupying North and South (35:10), cause one to wonder if these comparisons did not originate in the north rather than in the south (cf. 16:44-52). His frequent use of "the house of Israel," eighty-three times in all, usually for the whole community that centered in Jerusalem, would be more natural for one born in the old Israel than for a Judahite.

But the Aramaic elements in the book, the vocabulary, the word formations, the language structure, the confusion of prepositions *'al*, and *'al*, the plural ending in *-in*, all drafted on the one hand to prove a late origin, and on the other to support Babylonian authorship, may attest close personal contact with Samaria, or with the Phœnician coast. The Ras Shamra tablets (1300 B. C.) have very similar characteristics to some of Ezekiel's peculiarities that may indicate that such originated neither at a great distance, nor at a much later date.

If he were a Northerner, of good birth, born about the time of the Deuteronomic reform of 621 B. C., possibly affiliated with the local priesthood, we could imagine his family's taking advantage of the reform regulations and moving to Jerusalem to continue official duties there (cf. 2 Kings 23:8; Deut. 18:6-8). We learn, however, that those who availed themselves of these privileges, for some reason, were ultimately left in the lurch and naturally had to engage in other activities or find their way back home again (2 Kings 23:9).

Whatever may have been his early history, and wherever his home, born in such a period—a youth of 20 to 25 years of age at the first captivity—his early ministry would be completely overshadowed by Jeremiah; while the reform of Deuteronomy, in both ethics and ritual, would be likely to make a lasting impression on any sensitive nature.

Whether Ezekiel was ever in Babylonia must remain a query. That he continued to write as late as 570 is a conclusion drawn from 29:17. Some of his messages seem to have been delivered in Palestine at least as late as 585. But messages assigned to the second phase of his activity are largely non-committal as to place of origin. Smith has not exaggerated when he says that he can find only three oracles that are definitely addressed to the exiles: 20: 32, 33; 36: 16-32; 37: 11-14 (Smith, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 91). The prophet might have been a member of the captivity of 581 (cf. Jer. 52: 30), or he may have visited the colonies in Babylonia of his own free will. But no evidence is at hand that leads to such conclusions. Egypt could lay equal claim with Babylon as his late habitat, while the Phœnician coastland would rival both. Was the curtain rung down over his private life that the glory of his prophethood might more clearly shine from his public utterances? He was an incident in the stream of history; they are permanent gifts to the children of men.

One question of critical importance remains, Was the prophet subject to strange emotional upheavals, at which times he experienced strange restraints, performed peculiar acts, saw the supernatural, and heard and reported that which lay beyond mere human attainment?

It has long been held that he was an ecstatic, and that of a very peculiar type. Thus the abnormal was accepted by many as the unquestioned evidence that he was a man of God, and this feature gave weight to his utterances. Under this conception, the strange and the bizarre were emphasized and were supported by an accumulation of similar abnormalities, chiefly from primitive and psychopathic experiences (cf. Heinisch, *Das Buch Ezechiel*, 14; Schmidt, *Die Schriften des A. T.*, Gressmann-Gunkel, II, 2, 386-8).

Others have sought to understand the nature of this rare gift—that seems to be supported by the text—if thereby they might unravel the method by which the divine operates in the mystery of personality. This reached its logical climax in the work of Klostermann, who, in 1877, propounded the theory that scientifically speaking Ezekiel was a sufferer from catalepsy (*Th. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1877, 391-439). Many believed that on this theory an intelligent understanding might be had for the dumbness (3: 26, 27; 24: 25-27; 29: 21b; 33: 21, 22), the rigor of body (4: 5, 6, 8), his strange visions of Jerusalem activities, and his long-range vision (cf. 11: 13) while he was in Babylonia. Heroic efforts were made to assure the religious public that all these phenomena had at one time or another been duplicated.

Students of mysticism eagerly scanned the records and found in the experiences of some of the great mystics features akin to those reported in Ezekiel (cf. Hines, *A. J. of S. L.*, 1923, 37-71). Experimenters in psychic research added their quota in an effort to elucidate the hypothesis. Kittel, in one of the latest contributions to the study of Ezekiel, notes that the prophet was the child of two civilizations, Jerusalem in the throes of her death-struggle and Babylonia in the heyday of her glory, and that through this suffered a split-personality. Two souls struggled in him, and hence the peculiarities and the strange confusions of the book (*G. V. I.*, III, 164).

These studies have been worthful, for they have aided in clearing the ground of misapprehensions. If God chooses an erratic personality as the medium of his message, it in no way discredits the message; its value lies in its inherent worth. Also the reverse is true, abnormality carries with it no assurance of inspiration. More than one gem has fallen from the lips of the demented, and a life-long cynic has left us one of the most profoundly theistic poems in literature. What is written stands on its own merits, apart from psychological processes or personal claims.

A solution to the problem was arrived at from an entirely different angle. Instead of a dual personality, literary criticism has arrived at dual authorship. The strange physical activities, the dumbness, the visions and hallucinations, all those features that have been interpreted as the results of mental infirmity, are the literary product of a Babylonian editor of the prophetic roll. They are his interpretation of vague words and phrases of the original, together with additions that embodied traditions of the experiences of the prophet that were to hand. In this the editor—who probably lived a generation later than the prophet—was exercising only the usual and legitimate functions of a scribe. This editorial material is but loosely attached to the original, and in many places falls apart of itself (cf. 3: 23b, 24; 24: 25-27; 29: 21b).

This leaves us with the prophet Ezekiel as a writer with fair literary gifts, delighting in vivid illustration, facile with parable and allegory, with the ethical insight of the earlier prophets, and passionately indignant at the social and religious practices of his people. He was withal a normal, healthy-minded, vigorous prophet, who to his own generation was the unheeded voice of God.

With this hypothesis, that seems to be sustained by internal evidence, we lose a strange, psychopathic case, but gain a prophet, akin to, if not so brilliant as Isaiah and Jeremiah, and also a priestly scribe, who for his own generation, in his own language, interpreted constructively one whom he probably called master.

THE MESSAGE

The message of Ezekiel is naturally limited to those writings that by virtue of their content and the canons of criticism, can with some degree of assurance be assigned to this Jerusalem prophet. It falls easily into two divisions, separated by the destruction of the city in 586. The earlier, during and preceding the disaster, was largely a word of doom; the later was one of reconstruction. Essential principles were the same in both, and the later message was germinal in the earlier oracles.

The history and training of the prophet is everywhere in evidence. He was well acquainted with his religious forebears. Isaiah's call and his emphasis on the holiness of Yahweh, has more than colored our prophet's language and thought. Deuteronomy left on him the mark of all its essential teaching, and the language and ideas of Jeremiah are so constantly in evidence that on every page we find proof of a student's devotion to a great master. With such a background, amid the confusion and despair in Jerusalem, his message was almost predetermined. His call is reminiscent of Isaiah's and Jeremiah's. He was granted a vision, he heard a voice, he prepared for and responded to a desperate need.

From first to last Ezekiel's message was ethical, much the same as that of the eighth century B. C. prophets. Like Deuteronomy, he insisted on loyalty to Yahweh, as expressed in worship. His demand for practical ethics could scarcely go beyond that of his predecessors (cf. 18: 5-30). Yet it is interesting to note that the Septuagint has preserved a very curious reading, which may be original (34: 16), which assures that justice will be meted out to the strong as well as to the weak. Have we here an ethical note that has risen above class distinctions? He differs from some of the prophets, when he insists that the nation was corrupt from the beginning (20: 5-13), having Hittite and Amorite origins (16: 3, 45; 23: 2), while like most of his predecessors he held that they were worse than their worst neighbors (16: 34, 44-52).

To the field of ethics, belongs his contribution on individualism, which some have considered his chief message. While national solidarity had been the preaching of the earlier prophets, the query must often have arisen as to the justice of the saint suffering with the sinner. That the sins of the fathers should be visited on the children, to the fourth generation, was questionable justice. In national practice individuals, not families, had been condemned (cf. 2 Kings 14: 5, 6); and this had been written into the code of Deuteronomy as something new (Deut. 24: 16). But it was the destruction of the city that shattered group life, thereby shattering national solidarity that furnished an incentive for the new philosophy, individualism. Hence it was no accident that Ezekiel, the watchman (3: 16b-21), gave the classic statement of this doctrine (14: 14; 18: 1-24; 30: 10-20). In the light of this, instead of being bound up in the bundle of life, the individual who sins dies. Individual responsibility for individual acts puts a cutting edge on justice.

Not less important was his attitude toward the inner life. In a later message—though it is not absent from the earlier (cf. 7: 4)—he attacks the pride and haughtiness that are the first step toward self-deification (28: 3-10; 27: 3; 29: 3, 9; 31: 10; 33: 11-14). Expressed in other prophets, the climax is reached in these denunciations.

Shame, the result of an awakened conscience, and *the memory of your evil ways*, as an adequate punishment for the sinner, go far beyond any earlier writer in ethical sensitiveness (cf. 7: 18; 5: 8-10; 12: 16; 16: 52-54; 17: 22-24; 18: 30-32; 20: 43; 32: 24, 25, 30; 36: 29, 33, 38). How far this may be practical for humanity as it is, is questionable, but it is a forward step in ethical idealism.

Related to this in both spirit and text is his teaching of *the new heart*. This is expressed in other literature of uncertain date (Jer. 31: 31-33), but in no place is it more germane than here (6: 8-10; 11: 13-21; 18: 30-32; 36: 25-27). Such messages —individualism, shame and the new heart—place a remarkable emphasis on the inner life of the individual; and occupied with attitudes and motives, rather than externals, give Ezekiel an enviable place among the Old Testament prophets. Closely connected with this is a peculiarly humanistic touch, found in two places in the book. Will *you* judge, is the appeal of Yahweh, to this son of man (20: 4; 23: 36). Here there is thrown on man what ordinarily is considered the task of the Almighty. A prophet, or a man with the new heart, must sometimes act for and on behalf of Deity.

On the side of ritual the prophet was insistent that the prevailing worship was an abomination to Yahweh. It was syncretistic, majoring in fertility rites, and hence was intolerable to Yahweh. In this the influence of " the book of the law " that had raised the cult to a position of importance, is apparent. His denunciation was directed against the *gillulim*, filthy images—referred to thirty-nine times—the continued disloyalties in worship (16: 1-52; 23: 1-35), and pagan practices in the temple (8: 5-17; 11: 1-13).

Not only was he appalled by the apostate worship in itself, but this was carried on in " my sanctuary " (5: 11; 7: 19-27; 8: 6; 20: 3, 31, 33; 23: 39; 33: 11; 37: 26), and profaned " my holy name," making it doubly revolting. Under such circumstances Yahweh could remain in neither temple nor city (10: 18; 11: 23). Here is an implication that Yahweh was superior to and independent of the temple (11: 16), and it may be a turning-point in the emphasis on the new heart. From this there is but a step to "And I saw no temple there " (Rev. 21: 22).

No constructive outline of ritual has come from the prophet; that was left to a disciple. It is, however, within the range of possibility that scorn of the uncircumcised may be an expression of his attitude toward that rite, that later became the badge of Judaism (28: 10; 31: 18; 32: 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31). And he may well have had some interest in sabbaths, as well as in statutes and ordinances (chapters 20 and 22). On the other hand, in our present text, many such references come from a later scribe. From ritual he apparently turned to that which had chiefly to do with the inner life.

The new kingdom, a hope of the prophet, if not a program, was to be composed of "my people Israel," an old idea, also fundamental to Deuteronomy. The exiles were the most worthy (11:13b-21; 14:21-23; 33:24-29), and they would be gathered out of the nations (11:17-19; 17:22-24; 18:30-32; 20:33-38, 42; 37:15-18) and reinstated in the homeland, which would be thoroughly renewed (34:25-29; 36:8-15, 29-32). They would have a new heart and a right spirit (36:26-28); they would be made alive again (37:1-11); and captives (37:12, 13) and Joseph and Judah and their allies would again rejoice in the land (36:8-15; 37:15-23). With these Yahweh would establish his covenant of peace forever (16:62; 20:37; 34:25; 37:26-28; cf. Jer. 32:40-44). All this would be achieved by the power of Yahweh himself, who would be king (20:33-38), or better still would be the shepherd of his people, while one like David would be the active assistant (37:24-28). In three places there seems to be expressed the hesitant hope that the exiled king Jehoiachin might be the one chosen for this high office (17:22-24; 21:25; 29:21b). This achievement will be for the honor of Yahweh, for "my name's sake," so that "you may know that I am Yahweh." But this knowledge is not intellectual; it is that recognition of Yahweh that comes from personal relationship and that expresses itself in keeping his laws and giving him heartfelt homage.

Eschatology plays but a small part in this picture of reconstruction, and is part of the common inheritance of the day. The "day of Yahweh" is a day of disaster and doom, as in Amos and Zephaniah. A broad chasm exists between "the land of the living" and that of the dead (26:20; 32:23, 32); while in the underworld, or the pit, or Sheol, there are those divisions that suggest varying degrees of humiliation (26:20, 21; 28:8-10; 31:14-17; 32:18-30). The same is found in literature almost contemporary with this (Isa. 14:9-20).

Yahweh is in everything supreme. Ezekiel was a monotheist, accepting the absoluteness of Deity, even in the giving of laws that were evil (14:9; 21:4; 20:25, 26). His justice was not to be questioned (18:25, 29; 33:17, 20), and was inflexible, so that city, temple and people must be wiped out (5:11; 7:4, 9; 8:18; 14:14, 20; 18:25-30). He was alone and aloof, and man was weak, "mortal man," a phrase used in the book a hundred times, while "I am Yahweh" is repeated some sixty times. These are the ever-recurring phrases that bring out in relief the aloneness of Deity.

Yet he was merciful and compassionate, having no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but rather that all should turn and live (18:23, 32; 31:11). The underlying purpose of all history, the sorrow as well as the joy, is that you may know that I am Yahweh.

In three of his messages Ezekiel rises to high levels in religious thinking—his pronouncement on individualism, his ideal of the new heart, and his teaching of the aloneness of Yahweh. These three are coordinated in one whole, the individual with the new heart is at one with Yahweh. Probably injustice has been done the prophet in lauding him on the one hand as the "father of Judaism," and on the other as the "father of apocalypticism." His message was integrated with both, but his genius differed from both. In his dreams of reconstruction his feet were on the ground, and in regard to the law, circumcision of the heart was the essential. Though a pastor, he was more a prophet than a priest. A kindred spirit to Jeremiah, he was worthy of a recent encomium: "*Er ist ein Mann von ganz monumentaler Grösse,*" "a man of altogether monumental greatness" (Herntrich, 130). Such being the case it is not strange that a disciple should interpret his message.

THE BABYLONIAN EDITOR

Though unknown to us by name, the Babylonian editor was in his own right a real personality. One would scarce assert that in his youth he had listened to the instruction of the aged prophet—who may have been the religious head of his family—but that he was familiar with Ezekiel's writings and was captured by some of his ideas can scarcely be gainsaid. Not only was he a student of the earlier prophet, but he essayed to interpret the works of the older man. However, the major interests of master and disciple lay in different directions.

The new age called for a new declaration. The ruined nation, the scattered and bewildered people and the sporadic efforts toward reconstruction all awaited constructive leadership, a leadership that would contribute both inspiration and program. The period between 550 and 500 B. C., disturbing and therefore creative, was prolific of programs as is attested by Isaiah (40–55); Haggai; Zechariah (1–8); Isaiah (13–14; 9: 1-6; 11: 1-9); Leviticus (17–26), as well as by much editorial activity. During these years, the writer, probably a priest in Babylonia, in the name of Yahweh interpreted and enlarged the literary remains of his predecessor. With many of his phrases we are quite familiar: "mortal man," "rebellious house," "be ashamed" (43: 11), "my sanctuary," "my sabbaths," "my holy name," "for my name's sake," "I am Yahweh"—all commonplaces with Ezekiel. Some, such as "people of the land" (39: 13; 45: 22; 46: 3, 9; cf. 33: 2; 12: 19), have in the interim somewhat changed their meaning.

But the program is new; old teaching has been expanded to meet the changed situation; and the prophet has been institutionalized in the priest. Teaching, a part of the duty of the watchman, has become the watchword of the new régime (cf. 40: 4). "Mark well . . . the law of the house" (44: 5), and "make known all the laws thereof" (3: 10, 11; 43: 11, 12); this, discipline and not discussion, has been called the keynote of chapters 40–48. Not the ordinances and statutes of earlier days (Deut. 6: 4-9), nor the law of conscience of Ezekiel, but the law of my holy things, of my sanctuary, as expressed in the ritual of these chapters, is the law of my house. This is the editor's definite objective, centering all the life of the people in the temple in Jerusalem.

This seemed wise, if not essential. To follow the law of the individual conscience must have failed to unify Jewish groups and give them direction toward a definite objective. Israel needed cooperative action, and to this end rules to which all alike should pledge allegiance seemed desirable. A dictator can act in emergencies more effectively than can a democracy.

But beyond such an external need, a demand for regulations grew out of the historical and philosophic thought of the age. To intelligently build a program for reconstruction, it was wise to understand those forces that led to destruction. Yahweh had forsaken them was the essential reason, and that because of the sin that was in the land, the city and the temple—so said Ezekiel. To prevent the recurrence of this was the task of the disciple. Here, and probably because the doctrine of the new heart had been ineffective, he separated from the teaching of his master and proposed regimenting all religious life. This was an old and popular idea, poles apart from the writings of Ezekiel; but the ultimate objectives of both were the same.

Organizing material, much of which was at hand, his convictions gave form to the remarkably informative sketch of the holy city; built on a lofty mountain, removed far from the common and the unclean, with the temple served by priests, and protected by gates and bars; with the abode of Yahweh, beautified, cleansed, inviolable, in the holy of holies (40–48). That Yahweh was there, was the assurance that his people would be forever blessed (48: 35).

The required offerings were enumerated, meal-offering, burnt-offering, sin-offering and guilt-offering being specially emphasized; the sacred seasons were indicated: sabbaths and new moons, two days of atonement in every year (45: 18-20), morning burnt-offering (46: 13-15), besides free-will offerings that left leeway for extras; the officials were considered, and new regulations introduced; foreigners were prohibited from any part in the temple service; the Levites were degraded and the Zadokites honored, while the prince became a figure-head in the priesthood (46: 4-8, 12-14).

Two of these features were contributed from national experience. Foreigners were banned from religious services owing to close and unpleasant contacts (cf. 23: 12-21). This was an anti-Gentile movement from which there have been many repercussions. The other feature was the place assigned to the prince. More than once in Jewish history the king had been a trouble-maker, and this had been particularly true in the realm of religion. It is quite probable that the sad case of Zerubbabel was recent history. The kingdom had ended, the kings had largely disappeared, and now many turned to the consolations of religion. The kingdom was becoming the church, and policy gave the prince an honored place in the sanctuary.

A feature no less significant was part of their thought-world, the common idea that sin was infectious. Therefore garments, chambers, offerings, altars, people and priests must be ritually cleansed in order that worship might be acceptable to Yahweh. The outside of the platter to them was of extreme importance. Also such was the infecting power of holiness that anything with which Deity had had contact—garment, meat, or men—carried with it the fear of death for the common man (42:13, 14; 45: 19-23; 46: 20). In connection with this idea the distinction between the unclean and the clean, the profane and the sacred, was of great importance (22: 26). The one was common, the other was set apart for Deity and holy; and as they were alien, the one to the other, they must be kept separate (42: 20; 48: 15). To this end great care was to be exercised in teaching the people the differences between the two (44: 23, 24). The dread of sin and the fear of God are vital concepts for mankind, and no doubt this priestly philosophy, which is still prevalent, has prevented many from transgressing.

While Yahweh is in the holy of holies, still a building made with hands cannot contain him. The earth is his footstool; but he, the one all-glorious, is seated above the cherubim, and the rainbow is his throne. Transcending the children of men, and superior to the deities of Babylonia, the writer believed that Yahweh at times revealed his purposes to his messengers, by means of angel-guides (9: 2; 40: 3, 17, 24; 41: 1), and in strange experiences and supernatural visions (1: 1, 3; 40: 2). He, probably informed by tradition, was sure his master had experienced such; that at times he had been strangely silent (3: 23b-27; 24: 25-27; 33: 21, 22), and that again he had breathed the effective death-word against a distant sinner (11: 13a); that in a flash he had learned the unspoken purposes of Yahweh and had imparted this strangely gained information to an amazed people (33: 22; 24: 18, 21). In visions he had been shown the far-off city that he might the better understand the justice that lay behind the tragedy (8: 3; 9: 8-10). Thus by the inexplicable and the incredible was the prophet believed to be an accredited man of God. The hand of Yahweh was upon him; he was brought in the spirit; the spirit entered into him; the spirit lifted him up by a lock of the hair; the spirit caught him up; and stood him on his feet; the heavens were opened and he saw supernatural visions; and over and over again the glory of Yahweh appeared to him. This is the new and revealing vocabulary that is found only in those sections that come from the pen of the editor. In his own speech and in his own philosophy he was interpreting Ezekiel.

This gives us not only the disciple's estimate of his master, but at the same time, it opens a window into his own religious thinking. Not only are we aware of his priestly interests, but we get a glimpse of his idea of Deity. His God was great and glorious, ruling over all the nations, and was above all gods. But Israel was his people, and through his prophet he had revealed that he would restore them to their own land (47: 13-15); mercilessly destroy all their enemies, and establish them on their own soil forever. If in some ways he deviated from Ezekiel, he built on old foundations (cf. Deut. 6: 4-9; 12: 10, 11), and prepared the way for the later priests. Probably his program was more easily grasped than that of the prophet, and was more effective for a rebellious house. The disciple, not the master, deserves the name "the father of Judaism."

LATER MESSAGES

Additions and interpolations like a weather-vane always indicate the way the wind blows, and hence even insignificant glosses, if fully understood, aid in following the religious movements of the periods from which they come. But beyond this, such additions often set forth profound truths and express rare insight into the essential nature of man and God. A list of late material—by no means final, and only a minimum—is found in the Introduction. Such additions are not the product of one man or of one period, but extend over a century, from 500 to 400 B. C., or later.

A considerable group is composed of curses against foreign nations, some of which originated as late as the Samaritan controversy of 400 B. C. Few of them show any originality or contribute anything to the sum total of Scripture. We may pass over 25: 1–26: 6, 15-18, 19-21, with the note that the attitude toward "my people Israel"—glee at their suffering, or its equivalent—is the sin that is cursed. My people are becoming sacrosanct, and deserve special treatment. This is not rooted in good ethics or ideal religion, but is the spirit of petty tribalism that rather late established itself in religious circles. A delightfully human turn is given to this in an isolated verse, 28: 24, where the hope is that there shall be no more a pricking brier or an irritating thorn. Whether this was an echo from the Samaritan controversy or not, there are moments when to most the removal of the irritations and the irritators would seem like the dawn of the Kingdom.

Egypt is cursed because of the pride of her strength (30: 13-19), and is to be restrained within the bounds of Upper Egypt, so that she may no more rule over the nations (29: 13-16). Edom is doomed because she is rapacious and boastful (35: 1–36: 7). The statement, "you magnified yourself against me with your mouth, . . I have heard it" (35: 13), is illuminating. Yahweh is here not the transcendent Deity who can reveal himself only through intermediaries, but his presence is in the land, following the destinies of his people, listening to the intriguing of their enemies, an unseen guest in every council-chamber.

Closely related to these is a passage (13: 9), not earlier than 400 B. C., that deserves attention. In it all false prophets are to be excluded from the land and from the "circle of my people." The ideal presented is that of a closed corporation —such as the Puritans endeavored to establish in parts of New England—composed of only those who were able to produce satisfactory credentials, including doctrinal and blood tests.

Representing a phase of the same movement, is the allegory of Oholah and Oholibah, who had profaned my sanctuary (23: 36-49). Schisms of a religious nature had arisen, as usually happens when an effort is made to purify the church or the body politic. Yahweh himself will settle this disturbance, but the method is not suggested. As it lay within priestly interests, probably the hierarchy had control of the ways and means.

The remaining material diverges in two widely different directions. One majors on the specific ritual requirements for my people (22: 8, 23-29; 43: 13-27). In this my holy things, my sabbaths, my law, the distinction between the secular and the sacred, and the cleansing of the altar, and its ordinances are stressed—to the end that Yahweh may be favorably disposed toward his people, and establish them on their land forever. These additions are but a small part of such regulations that must have been in practice, some of which are now found in the Holiness and in the Priestly Codes; the chief purpose of which was to please Yahweh, and thus preserve the kingdom of God on earth. These were naturally interwoven into the structure of the book as it came from the hand of the Babylonian editor, whose prime interest was in the cultus.

The oracles of the other group give us a glimpse into the developing eschatology of later days. Tyre, Sidon, Edom and Egypt are sent down into the pit, the underworld, in which were degrees of humiliation and degradation, as well as of honor (26: 19-21; 28: 1-10; 30: 1-9; 32: 29-32). Sheol, that world lying beyond the world of the living (26: 20; 32: 32), called for by philosophy as a rounding out of this fragmentary existence and demanded by ethics in an assumed moral universe, is in this literature becoming more distinct, and more adequate. Interesting, if not significant, are two passages that indicate some placid enjoyment on the part of the occupants of the underworld. The nations are comforted at the sight of Pharaoh, when he was cast into the pit (31: 16), and the compliment to this is that Pharaoh in his dire distress will see the kings and princes of the other great nations and thus himself be comforted (32: 31; cf. 14: 22; 5: 13). This is the cold satisfaction of the pessimist, that others are as badly off as he!

Sheol is seen slowly taking form. Not only are the ancestors there, but her capacious maw is open for the great world nations; thus the underworld must have many recesses, for the segregation of national and tribal units. Also there are degrees of guilt, the influence of which must extend beyond the land of the living. In life the uncircumcised were among the most detested, so in the pit this word describes the most odious. But the other side, the higher, also appears, and out of Sheol, heaven is seen emerging, with the ancient military heroes as the charter members of the spiritual kingdom (32: 27).

Eschatology, in addition to interesting itself in the conditions of the hereafter, and inasmuch as it was loosing all hope for this present evil world, was eagerly speculating as to the period of transition. As in history great battles had always closed one era and introduced the next—Persia had overthrown Neo-Babylonia, that had destroyed Assyria—so in the divine order of things, in the future as in the past, the old age would be closed by an overwhelming catastrophe; later called the battle of Armageddon. The classic statement of this in Old Testament literature is the overthrow of Gog of Magog, so vividly portrayed in 38: 1–39: 20.

These, the latest contributions to the book, represent widely divergent ideas, but are nevertheless germinally related to the original Ezekiel. The exilic prophet, a creative mind, stood at the parting of the ways. The nation was destroyed; the temple in ruins; hence reconstruction was essential. Able to estimate human ambitions and the military power of the great nations, his hope for the future of his people was in Yahweh only. From this center there radiated three programs for the perfecting of national life, each with its specific emphasis. The first was the renewal of the inner, moral life of the individual. The second was the development of the law of the sanctuary, the observances of which would be pleasing to Yahweh. And the third, having no faith in the historic processes, believed that the direct supernatural intervention of the Almighty was the only hope for his people.

These three now lie side by side in our book of Ezekiel, each in its own way making a contribution to the solution of human problems, and each confident in the ultimate triumph of Yahweh. To the writer it seems that the prophet's interest lay chiefly, if not exclusively, in the realm of the spiritual—the first; that his disciple, the Babylonian editor, believed that to appear before Yahweh a man must have the cleansing power of ritual and the guidance of the priest; and that still later scribes added to the ritual, but especially to the eschatological. Ezekiel was a mystic, cultivating the inner light; his disciple was a priest, believing in sacramental grace; and the apocalyptist, failing to find God in history, turned expectantly to the age that was to be and put all his hope in the wonder-working God.

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK

As the book lies before us it presents a well-ordered whole. Kindred themes are segregated; chapters and booklets are definitely dated, covering twenty years of the active ministry of a prophet, 593 to 570 B. C.; all indicating that a definite theological purpose controls the present arrangement. It opens with a vision of Yahweh and closes with Yahweh in the midst of his people. In the first division there is devastation because of iniquity. Divisions two and three show how to remove the causes of downfall. The last section gives the organization essential to preserve the happy result. The summary of the contents in the present arrangement is as follows:

I. Destruction is coming on Jerusalem and Judah.
  1: 1–24: 27. The fall of Jerusalem and the desolation of Judah are imminent because of the iniquity of the people.
    (a) 1: 1–3: 27. The call and commission of the prophet.
    (b) 4: 1–7: 27. Jerusalem and Judah are to be destroyed.
    (c) 8: 1–11: 25. Jerusalem is to be destroyed because of idolatry. Yahweh leaves the temple.
    (d) 12: 1–19: 14. Destruction of Jerusalem a necessity because of the enormity of her sin. Each individual who is guilty must suffer, and the ways of God are equitable.
    (e) 20: 1–24: 27. Destruction is unavoidable. Yahweh will no longer hear; his sword is already drawn.

II. Destruction is coming on foreign nations.

25: 1–32: 32. Prophecies against foreign nations. The land must be freed from the evils that would interfere with the new régime. Ammon, Moab, Edom, the Philistines, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt must all be punished.

III. Restoration is assured to my people Israel.

33: 1–39: 29. Restoration is assured. Preparation must be made.
  33: 1-33. The prophet's commission.
  34: 1-31. Yahweh himself will rule.
  35: 1–36: 38. The land will be purified.
  37: 1-28. The nation will be revived.
  38: 1–39: 29. Foreign nations will be wiped out.

IV. The sanctuary, where Yahweh dwells, guarded by the priesthood, in the midst of the twelve tribes.

40: 1–48: 35. The priestly reconstruction of the new Israel. New boundary lines; a new Jerusalem in the midst of the tribes; a new temple in the center of Jerusalem; a new priesthood; Yahweh in the midst of the temple.

Close inspection of any part of the book reveals that the present orderly arrangement is superficial and does not extend to the contents of the sections (cf. Introd., XII–XV). Whether, as suggested by Hermann, preaching values determined the internal relations of the various parts or not, the present order is far from chronological; often it is a jumble. Of course, no collection of prophecies ever was a Pepys' diary. The state of the material is such that to reduce it to perfect order is impossible; yet that should not prevent the attempt. Some historical landmarks remain and these point the way. Earlier prophetic experiences and expressions became the molds of thought for later disciples, and these patterns may still be detected; and the well-known trends of the human mind, both normal and abnormal, may aid in the reorganization of the literary material.

The following analysis and critical reconstruction has been controlled by all the evidence that could be marshaled from every available source. At worst, it is not poorer than the book's present disorder; at best it is only a working hypothesis, an effort to see the mind of a man of God at work as he ministered in no mean way to an irresponsive and rebellious people.

I. 1: 1–24: 27. DESTRUCTION IS COMING ON JERUSALEM AND JUDAH

(*a*) 1: 1–3: 27. The call and commission of the prophet.

1: 1-3. The superscription. The date arrived at is the fifth day of the fourth month of the fifth year, that is July, 593 B. C. All is editorial, a late scribe contributing 1b, 2a, 3, as well as minor phrases. 1: 4-28. The vision of the glory of Yahweh. Apart from theosophical interpretations, such as some of the rabbis occasionally indulged in, and efforts to reconstruct a workable chariot from the impracticable specifications, this chapter has grave difficulties. In 1924 Hölscher, then in Marburg, with a feeling for poetic movement, concluded that a poem by the real Ezekiel was embedded in 1: 4-28, which he believed was preserved in verses 4 and 28. Hermann conceded the soundness of this judgment, but to that earliest message added two verses, claiming 1:4, 5, 27, 28, as the original deliverance. Herntrich, keenly alive to grammatical relations, asserted that both were wrong. Hermann was justified in holding to verse 27 for it was inseparable from 28, but it was just as surely linked up with verse 26, also verse 5 could not be separated from verse 6. Hence he concluded that the whole vision was a unit, and was the work of the Babylonian editor, who desired by this spectacular vision to accredit Ezekiel as a fully equipped prophet from Yahweh. This is quite within the range of possibility. Tradition has always crowned her heroes, and has detected their grandeur from childhood up. Thus was David honored by late tradition (cf. 1 Sam. 16: 1-23), and the priestly author of Chronicles was sure that Solomon had been crowned with full ecclesiastical honors and sanctions (cf. 1 Chron. 23: 1-5; 28: 1–29: 25; with 1 Kings 1: 5–2: 9).

Yet one is haunted by the feeling that Hölscher had insight into this chapter. Poetry does seem to lurk beneath the prose of the workshop; vision is alongside of the blue-print of the architect. It may never be possible to restore it, but not all of this is bald prose.

It is noticeable that in this chapter there are two quite distinct types of literary material. The one, so prominent that it usually obscures the other, is the description of the chariot and the cherubim, in which there is such a wealth of detail. Here the cherubim, the faces, the wings, the feet and the bodies, and the chariot, with its wheels and its eyes and its wheels within wheels, are all described with such minutiæ that wheels whirl within wheels and the vision is blurred. This, with perplexing repetition, is peculiarly true of verses 6-21, 23-25—verse 25 being a gloss.

But alongside of this are verses that are free from the cluttering details of the artisan, and show the swift brush of the artist on a large canvas with glowing colors. On its physical side it was a storm at sunset; but it was aflame with God, for one young man who saw it had been brooding over his mission and his people's destiny, and to him there came a voice, saying, "Go, speak!" These verses—though in the text there is some repetition and some late editorial work—probably include 4, 5a, 22ab, 26-28a. Verse 22c, "stretched out over their heads above" is absent from the Greek, and should be omitted. Verse 25 also is lacking in the Greek, and in 28c, "it had the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh. When I saw it I fell on my face," are explanatory phrases, loosely connected with the context syntactically; and are characteristic of the Babylonian editor. The translation of these verses will indicate their separateness from the context, their unity and something of their poetry.

4 While I was looking, lo! coming from the north
Was a storm-wind, having in it a great cloud,
With a zig-zagging fire, a radiance ensheathing it,
And from the midst of it was like the gleam of amber.

5 And amid the fire was like four living creatures;
22 And over the heads of the living creatures
Was like a burnished, crystal dome;
26 And above the dome that was over their heads,
Like sapphire, was the semblance of a throne;
And on what seemed a throne, the appearance of a man;

27 From his loins and upward, and from his loins and downward,
I saw an appearance like fire, a radiance around him,
28 Like the appearance of the bow, that is in the cloud,
On the day of downpour, so was the radiance round about,
And I heard a voice speaking.

As intimated in the commentary, while this is in literary form quite independent of the call of any other prophet, it is not unlike that of Isaiah in certain respects. Note the living creatures, the throne, the radiance and the voice.

1: 5b-21, 22b-24, the vision of the chariot. This machine is the work of a theologian, and in a Babylonian setting it interprets the living creatures of the earlier poet. These become, by aid of the addition in 10: 18, the cherubim, and are transformed into symbols of the deities of Babylonia. But this is not a vision, it is the product of theological toil; it is not a call to a task, it is the chart of an abstract idea. It belongs to a different world from that of 2:3-7; or 3: 4-9; or even 2: 8–3: 3; or 3: 16b-21.

2: 1-8a, the prophet's commission. 2: 1, and 2, *in toto* are from the Babylonian editor. The phrases are all formal, they all repeat what precedes or follows, and are the stock in trade of the chief editor of the book. Note especially, *the spirit entered into me*, found again in 3: 12, 14, 24; 8: 3; 11: 1, 5, 24; 37: 1, and 43: 5, most of which are editorial. Verse 3 links up directly with 1: 28, I heard the voice of one that spake, and he said to me. Verse 8a is a gloss, which could scarcely be applied to Ezekiel during his lifetime. It belongs to that contribution that looked on him as bitter, hasty, and erratic (cf. 3: 14, 15, 16a, 26). The body of this section 3-7, is parallel to, or a duplicate of 3: 4-9. While the content is the same, the phraseology so differs that both may come from the prophet himself, but at different times, with no way of judging priority. He was sent to preach to the children of Israel, a rebellious house.

2: 8b–3: 3, the prophet eats a roll. This has a forerunner in Jeremiah 15: 16, and commissions the prophet to study the writings of his predecessors. Unrelated in time or spirit to what precedes, it is probably a later conception of his mission. But it is to Jerusalem, and has an originality and an appropriateness to Ezekiel and his work.

3: 4-9, a message of destruction to Jerusalem; is a duplicate of 2: 3-7.

3: 10-16a, commissioned to go to the exiles by the river Chebar. No relation exists between this and the previous, duplicated mission. Atmosphere, language, direction and idea are as widely separated as was Jerusalem from the Chebar. The phrases, "the spirit lifted me up," "the glory of Yahweh," "the wings of the living creatures," "the hand of Yahweh was upon me," "seven days," and the audience, all are Babylonian. The division between the two literary contributions, the Jerusalem and the Babylonian, is so clear cut as to be unmistakable.

3: 16b-21, commissioned to be a watchman. Probably at one time this followed immediately after verse 10. It is parallel to 33: 1-20, which may be an expansion and presents the work of the prophet under another symbol. It is curious that we have three commissions, the verbal command, 2: 3-7, the written roll, 2: 8–3: 3, and now an official position as watchman. These could scarcely be the experiences of a moment, but were the convictions that matured during long and varied experiences, and were at different times expressed as we now have them. In these three, Jerusalem is the parish and we need not question but that Ezekiel was the pastor.

3: 22b, 23a, the prophet sent into the "valley." This is in Palestine, as the word "valley" or "gorge" would not apply in Babylonia, by the Chebar. It is possible that this is the first intimation of his commission, and like the call of Isaiah (6: 1-13), and Amos (7: 7-9), respectively, is not found at the opening of the book.

3: 23b-27, the prophet, dumb, and shut up in his house by the Chebar. Again the editor has shuttled us to Babylonia, and we hear his honored phrases, "the glory of Yahweh," "by the river Chebar," "the spirit entered into me," "he set me on my feet," and we are treated to strange psychic phenomena such as seclusion in his house, and dumbness. Verses 26c and 27b lack cogency in this paragraph.

The call of the prophet may be summarized as follows: The prophet seeking the will of Yahweh in his personal perplexity went into the valley (3: 22b, 23a), and in a great storm had a vision of fiery cloud, and rainbow (1: 4, 5a, 22, 26-28) from which he heard Yahweh commission him to go and preach to the rebel house of Israel (2: 3-7, parallel to 3: 4-9). Later his commission matures into the mastery of earlier Scriptures (2: 8b–3: 3), lamentation, and mourning, and woe to the rebellious house; and still later he realized that his function was more than that of a herald or a searcher of the lore of the ancestors, it was that of a watchman, a pastor. This material seems to have belonged to the Jerusalem edition of Ezekiel.

A Babylonian editor reworked this and added to it by way of interpretation. The date, at least (1: 1b, 2a, 3), the theological interpretation of the vision (1: 5b-21, 23, 24), the commission to go to the exiles (3: 10-16a), and the command to go to his house, announcing that he would be dumb (3: 23b-27). Smaller glosses crept into the text at various times (1: 25; 2: 6b, 8a; 3: 22a, 26c, 27b).

(*b*) 4: 1–7: 27, Jerusalem and Judah will be destroyed. This is the theme around which most of this section is gathered. Chapter 4 has two topics. Verses 1-3, 9a, 10, 11, 16, 17, in symbol portray the siege of the city. These verses in thought are consecutive. Verses 16, 17, continue 10, 11, but not 12-15; while 10, 11, immediately link up with 9a, but not with 9b; and 9a goes back to 1-3. Verses 4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15, deal in symbol with the duration of the exile. The two symbols became interlocked easily. The food supply is prominent in both; in the siege it is scant (9a, 10, 11, 16, 17); in the exile it is unclean (12-15). But a more subtle feature connects them. The Hebrew word for siege, in the singular means siege, in the plural bonds or restraints. It is the last word of verse 8, and in many manuscripts is in the singular, in others in the plural. From the first part of the verse it is evident that the theme is the restraints on the prophet, and not the siege of the city. Hence the plural form of the noun is to be preferred. The present combination was the work of an editor, who may also have inserted verse 7, intimating how a man could lie on his side and at the same time function as a prophet.

5: 1-4, the sword as a razor, a symbol of the destruction and the scattering of the people of Jerusalem. Verses 5-17, prolix and theological, interpret the symbol. Chapter 6: 1-7, 11-12, 13-14, the mountains, high places, and countryside are cursed. Verses 8-10, the remnant, among the nations will be conscience-smitten, seems late. Chapter 7: 2-4 and its parallel 5-9, and 10-13, in which verses 10, 11 are similar to 19: 10-14, are dirges over country and community, and 14-18, 19-21, 22-27, uttered in the midst of ruin, proclaim complete destruction.

No date is suggested in these four chapters, but the situation is clear. Jerusalem is on the verge of siege (Chaps. 4, 5), the country faces devastation (Chap. 6), and city and state are in the last stage of collapse (Chap. 7). In the history of Judah there is no more fitting date than 588–586 for this message. In Jerusalem at that time it would be dramatic, terrifying, and marked by moral quality. As plainly as language can state, to them it was directed (cf. 4: 3). To exiles in Babylonia, the charge that it was bizarre could not have been answered, but worse than that, it would have been meaningless. The evidence will sustain the proposition that apart from minor glosses, Ezekiel wrote the Jerusalem sections 4: 1-3, 9a, 10, 11, 16, 17; 5: 1-4; 6: 1-7, 11-14; 7: 1-27, about 588–586 B. C.

But the testimony for the remaining passages is not so decisive. The duration of the exile in 4: 4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15, has features that set it aside from the rest of the chapter. It is speculative, endeavoring to forecast the future, and has little in common with the prophet. It is occupied with numbers the significance of which we are in doubt. Does the forty years of Judah's captivity in any way connect with the seventy of Jeremiah (Jer. 25: 11)? This is most uncertain, and leaves the 390 or 190 even more uncertain (cf. Com.). The suspicion is that the writer was playing with numbers, and probably the best hazard is that it is part of the chronological scheme of the editor (cf. Introd. xii-xviii). Add to this the physical impossibility of lying on his side for the 390 and 40 days, part of it synchronous, and the impression grows that not only in part but *in toto* this is a literary composition and nothing else. It looks like theological theory, but was probably united with the siege symbol before the editorial link of verse 7. Who knows if Ezekiel wrote it?

5: 5-17, the interpretation of the sword-razor symbol, has interwoven in it considerable Deuteronomic material (6, 7, 8, 11), and is the preacher elaborating his text. No doubt Ezekiel the poet, sometimes became the homilist.

6: 8-10, is separated by content and grammar from its context. It is a message, couched in the third person (9, 10), to the exiles, and their punishment, overwhelming shame because of their evil is rather idealistic, for the man who poured out his fury on Jerusalem and Judah. A similar thought though in different phraseology is found in other passages of the book (16: 52, 54; 32: 24, 25, 30; 36: 1; 39: 26; 44: 13). Most of these are by one or another deleted from Ezekiel, but as this specific phrase is found in no other book, we are at a loss for an author. Its similarity in spirit to individualism and the new heart, leads one to accept it as a product of the crushing experiences of the exile, and a possible contribution from the pen of Ezekiel. The idea, however, is late rather than early, and belongs to the circle of Wisdom rather than that of Prophecy.

(*c*) 8: 1–11: 25. The destruction of Jerusalem.

The topic common to the two previous sections is found throughout this booklet, in which there are two quite distinct approaches, in two definitely different types of literature. The one consisting of chapters 9, 10, and 11: 22-25, shows the same characteristics as 1: 5b-21, 23-25; 3: 11-16a, 23b-27. Its interest is theological, it comes from Babylonia, and was written long after the fall of the city. The superscription 8: 1-4 naturally is part of the chronological system that is Babylonian. The remaining material, 8: 5-18; 11: 1-13a, at one time consecutive, is acquainted with the details and personnel of the temple worship. The idolatry that was practised is exposed. The image of jealousy (5, 6), the seventy elders worshiping animal figures (7-13), the women indulging in Tammuz ritual (14, 15), the evil counsel of the chief leaders (11: 1-13a), all are scathingly attacked. Paragraph 11: 13b-21 (cf. 9: 8-10), concerns the remnant and comes from the second period of this ministry.

In the first division of the booklet (8: 5-18 and 11: 1-13a), there is a factualness that suggests that the writer was on the scene in person, and that this was delivered in the temple, face to face with the performers of pagan rites. Plainly it was a message to the priesthood in Jerusalem, probably delivered between 588 and 586 B. C., by the prophet Ezekiel. It has the detail of an actual experience rather than of a vision. It is true, the prophet was guided by Yahweh (8: 7, 14, 16; 11: 1), but this is evidence, not that it was purely imaginative, but that he was confident Yahweh was leading him in this radical exposure of conditions in the temple. The verbal form used in all these cases, *and he brought me,* in other places is used for the inner urge of the divine spirit, where nothing abnormal is implied (cf. Jer. 18: 2; 19: 1; 22: 1). The objectivity of this temple itinerary is supported not only by the personal names, and the phases of ritual challenged, but particularly by the death of Pelatiah, *now it happened that as I was prophesying Pelatiah the son of Beniah died* (11: 13).

This has always been a crucial problem in interpretation. So long as the author was believed to be living in Babylonia, the incident had to be explained either by a marvellously gifted personality, or it had to be explained away. Some exhausted their energies to prove that Ezekiel had the power of the magic word, that could slay at a distance of eight hundred miles, or that he had second sight, or that he had both. Not a few eagerly added this episode to the quota of the miraculous and like one of old, who concluded, *credo quia absurdum est,* to them absurdity was the assurance of actuality. Others more trustful of intelligence, brought poorly founded incidents, or far-fetched scientific parallels to give to it a semblance of the possible. Some went so far as to conclude that there must have been a happy coincidence between the time of Ezekiel's writing and the death of Pelatiah, which was verified later and then recorded. None of these carry very strong conviction.

But if Ezekiel lived and taught in Jerusalem, as is acclaimed from internal evidence, the problem is at once resolved, and values are enhanced. The prophet, convinced that he was led of Yahweh to denounce wickedness in high places, in oracle after oracle, rebuked the official leaders in the midst of their profane practices, in the name of Yahweh. If the tone of his writing reveals his indignation, we can well believe that his was no idle threat. No one would be surprised if some one, conscience-smitten under the invective of the man of God, should collapse. This has happened before and will happen again. This is what is stated in the text, As *I was prophesying,* Pelatiah . . . died (11: 13).

The other and major part of this section, moves in an entirely different world and has two divisions. The first (a) a vision of the city destroyed by supernatural agencies (9: 1, 2, 4-7, 10b, 11 and 10: 2, 6, 7). This is unique in the book. It looks like a vision inserted by a scribe who left out part of it. The scene of slaughter, the method of separating and saving the righteous, and the burning of the city, are all presupposed for a complete story, but no trace of them is found. But it is purely visionary, and not historical. Neither were the righteous saved from the catastrophe, nor was the debacle so complete as announced. It is a fantastic picturing of the catastrophe (Herntrich, 94), and has kinship with Ezekiel in one particular, the separation of the righteous from the wicked (18: 1-24), but there all similarity ceases. It has the imaginative features of some of the visions of Zechariah (cf. Zech. 2: 5-9; 5: 1-10), but is still closer to the folk-tales that later must have been prevalent, some of which have been preserved in Daniel. In fact, the man clothed in linen is again met in Daniel 10: 5, 6, and in 12: 6, 7, where there are some features that remind one of this vision. It is scarcely the work of the Babylonian author, but has been tied into chapter 10 by a still later scribe (cf. 9: 3; 10: 2, 6, 7).

The second part of this second section is (b) 10: 1, 3-5, 8-22 and 11: 22, 23, where the glory of Yahweh deserts the city. The living creatures of 1: 5-21, 23-25 reappear here as cherubim. The description of them in 10: 8-17, which is the essential part of this vision duplicates what is in 1: 5-21 (cf. 10: 8 with 1: 8a; 10: 9, 10; with 1: 15-18; 10: 14; with 1: 10; 10: 16, 17; with 1: 19, 20). There are marked differences between this and the earlier chapter. Tarshish of 1: 16 becomes stone of Tarshish in 10: 9; the verb for lifted up in 10: 17, differs from that in 1: 19. The verse-order differs greatly, all proving that neither one is a copy of the other, nor have we two recensions of an original. Rather a scribe interested in introducing the tale in chapter 9, has changed, omitted and added from 1: 5-28 as he saw fit.

Verses 18, 19, of which 11: 22, 23 is a parallel, Yahweh deserting the temple, present the purpose of the chapter. These are two versions of the same vision, agreeing in the main, but differing in detail. In the first, the glory of Yahweh is over the cherubim, at the gate of the temple, poised for flight; in the second the glory of Yahweh had left the city and stood on the mountain eastward. Following Oriental literary methods, the two stories, while differing in details, have been preserved by the scribe. Both indicate the departure of Yahweh, neither intimates his destination. It is however noteworthy, that the glory of Yahweh can be separated from the cherubim-chariot, which does not seem to be an integral part of the glory of Yahweh. The same separation can be made in the literary structure of the vision, without any loss to Yahweh. Does this hint at different literary origins?

Two smaller fragments, 9: 8-10a and 11: 13b-21, each interested in the remnant, come from a different source. The first and smaller one is a prayer for the remnant, *all that is left of* Israel. The answer gives no hope. While *remnant* is the only word suggesting a period of origin, it breaks in on the vision and comes from some other writer. Ezekiel may have breathed this hope in the days of final tragedy. The longer fragment, 11: 13b-21, has the captivity in the background, recognizes that the new heart is the essential preparation for the reconstruction program, and like 36: 26, 27 and 37: 9, 14, a prophet, not a priest was the author, possibly Ezekiel earlier than 570.

Editorial activity is found throughout the booklet. 8: 1-4 is part of the chronological framework. It is in closest relation to chapter one. Verse 1 is related to 1: 1 and verse 2 comes from 1: 27, while 3 echoes 2: 9 and 3: 12, 14; and the whole superscription is conscious of 3: 15, 16 and 4: 5, 6. The date September, 592, does not date closely any of the items contained in the section. 8: 7 is the explanation how entrance could be made to a secret chamber, by some one who was sure his priestly ancestors could never have publicly performed such abominable rites. 9: 3a; 11: 1a, 5b, come from the Babylonian editor, who thereby linked it up with chapter 10; and 10: 2, 6, 7 are the continuation of the vision in chapter 9. In 11: 24, 25 the same writer, knowing that with Yahweh all things were possible, by the agency of the spirit brought the prophet back to the exiles on the banks of the Chebar. Other scribal glosses are of minor importance.

(*d*) 12: 1–19: 14. The destruction of Jerusalem.

Again this is the general topic for a collection of oracles which has great diversity of subject and material and little organic unity. Nor are they, as a whole, closely connected with the preceding.

The messages are roughly analyzed as follows: (1) 12: 1-20, king and people will go into exile. (2) 12: 21-28, prophecy will not fail. (3) 13: 1–14: 23, false prophets denounced. (4) 15: 1-8, allegory of the burnt vine. (5) 16: 1-63, Jerusalem is adulterous. (6) 17: 1-24, Zedekiah is faithless. (7) 18: 1-32, individualism. (8) 19: 1-14, dirges over the princes.

No. 1. 12: 1-20, king and people will go into exile, has three sections; verses 1-7, the captivity symbolized by the prophet digging through the wall and carrying off his baggage by night, is a sign to the citizens, verses 8-15 (16) the symbol is interpreted, and verses 17-20, the prophet, a sign, is on reduced rations. The familiar phrases, *rebellious* house, *my net, the prince*, and *may know that I am Yahweh*, and the symbolic enactment of coming captivity, resembling chapters 4 and 5, all remind us of Ezekiel. These messages would be effective in no place but Jerusalem, and at no time more so than 590–588. Verses 12, 13 are sometimes considered scribal, but their very vagueness classifies them as prophecy, not history. Verse 16, in which the remnant is the theme, alone is foreign to the context. In part it carries us back to 5: 3, and the strange note, they shall describe all their abominations among the nations, reminds one somewhat of bearing their shame in 5: 15; 6: 9; 16: 52, 54, *et al.*

No. 2. 12: 21-28. Prophecy will not fail is the assertion made to those who are skeptical about Ezekiel's preaching of ruin, as the same thing had been threatened for two centuries. But the prophet religiously asserts his conviction. This serves as an introduction to,

No. 3. 13: 1–14: 23, in which doom is pronounced on: (a) False prophets (13: 1-16); (b) Prophetesses (13: 17-23); (c) Idolaters (14: 1-11); and on the basis of cumulative evidence, (d) The destruction of Judah and Jerusalem is justified (14: 12-23).

The main parts of No. 3 belong to the Jerusalem ministry of Ezekiel. Though the text of (a) is very corrupt, the trend, and the vigor of the original are beyond dispute. It has the attitude of Ezekiel and the spirit of his contemporary Jeremiah (cf. Jer. 23: 9-40). Verse 7b is scribal, and that 9 is an insertion from a time as late as 400 B. C., is evident from the phrases *circle of my people*, and *register* or book of life. This idea owes its emphasis to the attitudes of Nehemiah and Ezra toward marriages with foreigners.

(b) Against prophetesses, is weighted with Aramaic vocabulary (cf. Hölscher, 85) and shows Babylonian influence, though both of these features had leavened the country earlier than the captivity. How completely the women were devoted to the ritual of Assyria, and Babylonia is seen in the denunciation in Jeremiah (Jer. 44: 15-19). Verses 22, 23 have no connection with the context, but are influenced by the idea of individualism, and read as an afterthought.

(c) 14: 1-11, introduces the elders of Israel to us, as in 20: 1. One cannot be sure that this is not a happy expedient whereby a desired topic is presented. On the other hand, the prophet may have been a native of the north, and Israelites after the fall of Samaria had many definite interests in Jerusalem. This visit is within the range of probability. The question is, will Yahweh listen to the prayer of an idolater? The answer is no, the idolater will be cut off from my people. If the main part of this was as early as 586, it has been worked over at a later time. Verses 9-11 are independent, and the paragraph is a return to the attack on the false prophets.

(d) 14: 12-20, an apologetic for the ruin of the city and the slaughter of the population, that was so corrupt that not even the greatest saints of Hebrew tradition could have saved even their own children. Verses 21-23 are supplementary and state that those who did escape were so utterly worthless, that to meet them would convince one that the ruin was justified. Both parts of this belong to a later strata of the book, the second stage of the work of Ezekiel. The last one is strongly pro-exile.

No. 4. 15: 1-8, the allegory of the burnt vine, which is good for nothing, is a symbol of Israel. This is the illustrative method of Ezekiel.

No. 5. 16: 1-63, Jerusalem is adulterous. (a) 1-43 is a unit, with only 30a and 32, as probable scribal additions. In allegory, the city is described as a foundling (1-7), a bride (8-14), unfaithful (15-34), deserving punishment (35-43). Naturally there are folk-tales that parallel this, and the whole story has such as its background, but that furnishes no ground for folk-tale interpolations in 13, 14. It reads as from Ezekiel to Jerusalem during 590–586 B. C.

(b) 44-52, the ancestry of Jerusalem is Hittite and Amorite, and her kin are Samaria and Sodom, than whom she is more profligate. Again it is the spirit of Ezekiel, who probably came from the north, and is a fitting message preceding 586 B. C.

(c) 53-63, restoration promised the three sister cities, is post-exilic, and at least in the present form is non-Ezekiel. Bearing your shame, and justifying your sisters (54, 55, 63), has an accent frequently found in this book (cf. 5: 15; 6: 9; 16: 52 *et. al.*, cf. Introd., XXIV).

No. 6. 17: 1-24. An allegory of the great eagles and the twigs of cedar; Zedekiah's revolt and its consequences. (a) 1-15 and (b) 16-21, present the allegory and two interpretations. Nebuchadnezzar takes Jehoiachin captive (3, 4), and places Zedekiah on the throne of Jerusalem (5, 6) in 597 B. C. The kinglet rebels and forms an alliance with Hophra of Egypt (7, 8) in 590 B. C. (Jer. 27: 12-15; 2 Kings 25: 1). The Babylonian monarch will surely punish his viceroy for rebellion (10-15), and for covenant-breaking he will be judged in Babylon and die there (16, 20). There can be no doubt but that this was a declaration made in Jerusalem previous to 586, as, among other things, the writer was ignorant of the judgment of Zedekiah at Riblah (2 Kings 25: 6). Favorite phrases of Ezekiel, "rebellious house, spread my net over him, shall know that I am Yahweh," and the illustrative quality are in keeping with authorship by this prophet.

(c) 22-24, is a Messianic, eschatological, reconstruction of the kingdom. If not from the late days of Ezekiel, it may belong to the time of Zerubbabel, when national hope blazed up in a great splendor, as witnessed by Zechariah (cf. Zech. 2: 1-9, 12-17; 3: 6, 7; 6: 9-15, and probably Isaiah 9: 1-6; 11: 1-9; 2: 2-4).

No. 7. 18: 1-32, the doctrine of individualism is expressed vigorously. This chapter has no relation with either 17 or 19. On its own merit it is in the collection. Verses 1-4, quote the popular proverb, which the writer repudiates, and asserts individual responsibility. Verses 5-20 (cf. 3: 18-21; 33: 10-20) insist that the good son of an evil father should live, and the evil son of a good father should die. Verses 21-25, which are duplicated in 26-29, argue that an evil man who repents should live, while a good man who lapses should die. From this line of reasoning the prophet insists that the ways of God are just. Verses 30-32, are a call to repentance and to gain a new heart (cf. 11: 19; 36: 25-27), for Yahweh wishes all men everywhere to live.

During the siege of the city, such proverbs would be popular, and following the collapse of the state, we would expect the above line of reasoning to develop. When racial solidarity was shattered as a fact, then the philosophy of individualism became a necessity. Each man had to take care of himself, later he developed the theory. This doctrine was probably wrought out after 586. The love of detail, the ethical interest, and the new heart are quite in keeping with the style and the spirit of Ezekiel. The priority of this, or the similar sections in the book (3: 18-21; 33: 10-20) can be argued pro and con, but without any final judgment.

No. 8. 19: 1-14, an allegory, a dirge over Judah personified as her three kings, Jehoahaz (3, 4), Jehoiachin (5-9), and Zedekiah (10-13). No sure mention is found of King Jehoiachim (608–597), though the disturbed text, and certain phrases in verse 8 cause suspicion that a fitting memorial to him may have been lost in the processes of editing. The singer knew the history of Judah until after the Gedaliah-Ishmael folly (13). Verses 1 and 14b are editorial, and 10-14a have been found of doubtful authorship as the vine is the symbol, not the lion as in the other dirges. But such criticism is controlled too little by poetic imagination and too much by the academic. The same mixture of symbols is found in Genesis 49: 8-12, and there is little question but that Ezekiel was the author, and that it was composed during the days immediately after the desolation of 586.

(*e*) 20: 1–24: 27. The destruction of Jerusalem is immediate. The five chapter-divisions have, with one exception, analyzed the material as adequately as possible.

1. 20: 1-44. Jerusalem will be destroyed because of idolatry (1-32) and redemption is promised (33-44).

2. 20: 45–21: 27. Fire and sword are coming, Nebuchadnezzar is at the crossroads; Zedekiah will be dethroned (24-27).

3. 22: 1-31. Jerusalem is a bloody city, economically, socially and religiously.

4. 23: 1-49. Jerusalem is a harlot (1-35); Samaria and Jerusalem are harlots (36-49), and will be punished.

5. 24: 1-27. The city is doomed (1-15); the temple will be destroyed, but it will be no loss (16-24), an appendix (25-27).

1. 20: 1-44. Israel's idolatry and redemption. (a) 1-32. Israel has been idolatrous from the beginning. 1-4, Introduction. Israel was idolatrous, 5-9, in Egypt; 10-17, in the wilderness during the first generation; 18-26, during the second generation; 27-29, during settlement in Canaan; 30, 31, and is idolatrous in the present generation. Verse 1, like 14: 1 belongs to the chronological scheme (q. v), and verse 2 is part of the formulæ, while 3 goes back to 14: 2. Verses 27-29, have been questioned, but on a slight basis. Verse 31 recurs to the question in the beginning and closes the cycle. Thus 32 hangs in the air, and is independent. A serious question is raised concerning the authenticity of 12 and 20 that reproduce Ex. 31: 13, 14, (P), and the recurring phrase "my sabbaths are greatly profaned," 13, 16, 21, 24 (Hölscher, 110). These read like supplementary material and may be removed without injury to the grammatical structure of the Hebrew. It may be questioned, if this emphasis on the sabbath existed in the early days of the exile. Apart from the foregoing the section is a unit, naturally delivered in Jerusalem between 591 and 588 B. C.

(b) 33-44. Restoration from among many nations promised Israel, for my name's sake, comes from some period after 586 B. C. The authenticity has been questioned, but it is of the same spirit as 14: 21-23; 17: 22-24; 18: 30-32, and may represent the second stage in the activity of the prophet.

2. 20: 45–21: 23. Jerusalem's destruction is certain and immediate. The first division, 20: 45–21: 23, with its threat of fire and sword, the splendid sword-song, and Nebuchadnezzar at the crossroads, it is generally agreed comes from Ezekiel preceding 588 B. C., and evidently was a message to Jerusalem. Verses 23b and 24 are probably connective glosses. The second division, 24-27, the dethronement of Zedekiah belongs to practically the same period. The one whose right it is, probably refers to

Jehoiachin (cf. 17: 24). The curse on Ammon (21: 28-32), is a mosaic, has late words, appropriates part of the sword-song, is later than 25: 1-7 and probably belongs to the Nehemiah period. At any rate it bears no similarity to the work of Ezekiel.

3. 22: 1-31. Four sections are found in this chapter, with the destruction of the city as the common bond. 1-16, Jerusalem, through oppression, sex-irregularities, and idolatry is the bloody city and must be punished. 17-22, her metals must be cleansed in the smelting furnace. This is not *rein literarisch* (Hölscher, 117), unless we follow the fiction that it was written in Babylon. On the verge of the siege in 588 both utterances must have been significant, if not effective. Probably verse 8, an intrusion in the thought, is a late insertion.

The third section, 23-29, proclaims all classes guilty. In language and idea there are similarities to Ezekiel as, *roaring lion, princes, I am profaned, smear on with whitewash;* but the emphasis on *holy things, my sabbaths, clean and unclean,* is well on the way to the Priest Code. Its authenticity is doubtful (Herntrich, 107). It is possible that a message from Ezekiel to the ruling classes in Jerusalem during the siege, may later have been worked over by a member of the priesthood. In 30, 31, is an oracle that reminds us of Zeph. 3: 1-4; the writer looks back on the fall as an accomplished fact. It is supplementary to the previous section, and intimates the city fell because there was no one competent to lead in the crisis.

4. 23: 1-49, has two sections, 1-35, Oholibah, or Jerusalem the harlot; and 36-49, Oholah and Oholibah, or Samaria and Judah, the two harlots; punishment is threatened in both cases. The first part is parallel to chapter 23, and Jerusalem is worse than Samaria and will suffer a worse punishment. While there is nothing new in it, Hölscher finds within it a poem of fair quality (Hölscher, 121, 122), while he considers there is evidence of much scribal interpolation. Verses 28-30 are parallel to 22-27, and verse 21, which uses the pronoun of second person rather than the third is late. But originally this was a threat against Jerusalem, by Ezekiel about 588, a time when Egyptian intrigue gave point to the especial blame on Egypt (2, 8, 19, 20, 21, 27).

The second section 36-49, is supplementary to the above. Samaria and Judah are two women; they are to be judged together, by *righteous* men, not by the enemy and are to be stoned by *the assembly.* All the evidence points to 400 B. C. or later as the time of composition. Intermarriages with foreign women which was a violation of the late priestly regulations, seems to be the background (cf. Ezra 4: 7-16; 9: 1-4; 10: 9-44; Neh. 13: 4-31).

5. 24: 1-27, the city is doomed. This is the wail in three separate sections. 24: 1-14, the citizens are like chopped meat in a filthy caldron set on a white-hot flame. The Babylonian army has invested the city. In the midst of confusion of text and topic, there is poetry and certainty of the general meaning. Verses 1, 2, belong to the chronological scheme (q. v), and 13, 14 parallel 9-11 which depend on 3-5. There are other difficulties or disarrangements in the text. However, it reads as though the original was delivered by Ezekiel in Jerusalem at the time of the approach of the Babylonian army 588 B. C.

In 15-24, the temple, the " desire of your eyes," is doomed to destruction, because of the corruption of worship (cf. 21). Its ruin will be no loss to religion, hence there must be no lamentation (22-24). Verses 18, 21b, and 24, are interpolations from different sources. In regard to verse 18, the following features should be noted. In itself it is incoherent. The three sentences follow one another, but there is no indication whether they refer to one or to two different mornings. Translators have tried to overcome this by disregarding the Hebrew. Further, "my wife" is introduced from nowhere. The verse has no relation to what follows, and only through misinterpretation is it connected with verse 16. In fact, it is apparently a gloss on the "desire of your eyes" in 24: 16, and separates verse 17 from 19-21a, 22-24 that present the actual interpretation of 15-17. While on the face of it, it is not unreasonable to think of the *desire* of ones eyes as being his wife, it is not the usual meaning given the Hebrew. Treasure is usual, and in 1 Kings 20: 6, and Joel 4: 5 it means material treasure. But it is significant that in three passages it is parallel to sanctuary, or the worship in the temple. Quotations, with the word for desire in italics, will make this clear:

> Isa. 64: 11, Our holy and beautiful house,
> Where our fathers praised thee,
> Is burned with fire;
> All our *pleasant things* are laid waste.
>
> 2 Chron. 36: 19, And they burnt down the house of God, . . and
> destroyed all the *goodly vessels* thereof.
>
> Lam. 1: 10, The oppressor has laid his hand upon all *her treasures*,
> For she has seen the nations enter her sanctuary.

These features explain the presence of 18 in our text, and when it is removed, we have a connected message concerning the temple and its fall. 21b has been slipped in from human interest, while 24, which is in the third person, is for edification. Probably the prediction came from the closing days of the siege in 586.

The concluding verses 25-27, come from the Babylonian editor, 26, 27 linking up with the chronological scheme. To the historico-religious interests of this scribe we owe much for the orderly arrangement and preservation of the book of Ezekiel, also some of the difficulties.

II. 25: 1–32: 32. The Nations Are Cursed

This section consists of a collection of oracles against seven nations. It fittingly follows chapters 1-24—denunciations of Israel—and precedes chapters 33: 1–48: 35, the hope of, and the plans for, national reconstruction.

The judgments against five of the seven nations, Ammon, 25: 1-7; Moab, 8-11; Edom, 12-14; Philistia, 15-17; and Sidon, 28: 20-23, are formal, of slight significance and undated. The number seven apparently represents a complete quota. It is artificial rather than essential and savors of scribal or priestly interest (cf. 3: 15, 16). It was the local Palestinian horizon, not the Babylonian, that determined the selection of the guilty cities and nations.

The reproach against these five—Edom differs slightly from the others—is formal and innocuous, reminding one of form-letters that require only the insertion of a name. The writer—and the five probably came from the same hand—was acquainted with local history. The city had fallen, the land of Israel was desolated, the house of Judah had gone into captivity, and the neighboring tribes had rejoiced at this humiliation (25: 3, 6, 8, 15).

Only a few minor phrases give any clue to a more definite date. My sanctuary was defiled (3), one of the details, is significant. In 586 the temple was destroyed, rather than defiled. So far as our records show, the earliest date when such a cry could be uttered was around 400, when Sanballat the pro-Samaritan, and Tobiah the Ammonite, held places of importance in the temple, which the Nehemiah-Ezra movement outlawed (Neh. 13: 4, 5, 7-9, 28-30). The attitude for which these five tribes are held guilty—glorying in the plight of Judah, holding her in contempt, acting vengefully toward her (3, 6, 8, 12, 15)—is exactly the situation in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. It was at the same period that the movement of the Nabatæan tribes from the south and east was affecting all the local clans with threats of invasion (cf. 5, 10, 13). The verdict that these five denunciations came from around 400 B. C., and were the product of a scribe who on the one hand wished to round out the number seven, and on the other hand hoped that the day would come when there would not be a scratching brier or a festering sore (28: 24), caused by the presence of Ammonite, Edomite and Moabite invaders—this verdict seems to be sustained.

26: 1–28: 19, the judgment against Tyre. With the last five seem to go two other sections, 26: 2-6 and 28: 1-10. 26: 1 gives the date (lacking the month), 586. It belongs to the general scheme, with little relation to most of the oracles following.

26: 2-6, Tyre's rejoicing over Jerusalem (2), is a popular slogan that might be used against any defeated city. The threat is a compilation of earlier phrases (cf. 4 with 9, 12, and 5 with 12, 14, and 6 with 8), hence is later than the rest of the chapter. Also the punishment is vague, many nations will inflict general desolation, and it is akin to chapter 25. The same is true of 28: 1-10, while 28: 20-23, the attack on Sidon, is the most insipid of the lot.

28: 1-10 has had a somewhat similar history. Verses 3 and 4 are out of place, but owing to the corrupt state of the text no solution seems satisfactory. " Prince " could not be used for a ruler of Tyre until some time after 570. King was the earlier term, and judge was used for some time after. Pride and self-deification are sins that became serious in the later period. Evidences of the influence of 27: 3b-9a and 28: 11-19 are seen throughout. Apparently this was not in its present form earlier than the beginning of the fourth century B. C.

Two eschatological messages have been included in these denunciations: 26: 19-21 sends Tyre down to the pit in the underworld, among the age-long ruins, and she will never again inhabit the land of the living. This section has drawn on 31: 14-17 and 33: 18-30 for both the phraseology and the idea, and is a late imitation. 28: 25, 26 is a Messianic promise to the house of Israel that she will be redeemed from among the nations, and will dwell safely in the homeland. It was written after the dispersion, but when is nowhere indicated.

To Ezekiel belongs the glory of the important parts of this section. 26: 15-18 has enshrined within it a poem 17b, 18abc, which expresses confidence in the utter destruction of Tyre. It sounds like Ezekiel, and is probably from 583 B. C. or after. It has been furnished with an introduction and a conclusion by someone familiar with 27: 32-35. 26: 7-14 is a colorful picture of the attack of Nebuchadrezzar on Tyre, giving a summary of siege activities of 583–572 B. C. It is vivid, as from an eyewitness, and poetic, as from Ezekiel. The correct spelling of the Babylonian king's name stamps it as good source material, and probably early.

27: 3-9a, 25b-36, the glory of Tyre and her doom, originally a unit, is of unusual merit. The author was familiar with the sailing vessel, its construction and manning, as well as with the ocean traffic of his day. All is in telling phrase, and the description of the destruction of the good ship Tyre, shattered in the midst of the sea by the east wind (Babylon), is the work of a master. 27: 9b-25a, a summary of Tyrian trade, has been inserted into the middle of the above poem. This is an excellent précis of the commercial activities by land and by sea of the chief port city on the Mediterranean during these centuries. It savors of bills of lading; it is a glimpse into the day ledger of an ancient business house, prepared for popular consumption; but one would scarcely credit Ezekiel with its composition.

28: 11-19, Tyre and the garden of Eden, may be credited to his pen. Verses 11, 12a refer to the king of Tyre and are editorial. The garden of Eden story parallels our Genesis narrative in some important features, and adds much to our knowledge of Semitic mythology. It is a fair interpretation, that to the author Samaria was "the garden of the gods."

29: 1–32: 32, the judgments against Egypt are furnished with six chronological notes, running from January 587 to April 570. Three of them belong to 587, two to 585, and the third to 570. Their relation to some of the oracles seems close, to others remote. The chronological notes are discussed in the Introduction; and the following is a general summary of the material.

29: 3b-6a, Pharaoh the sea-monster slain, and 6b-9a, Egypt the broken reed, may both be assigned to Ezekiel, and no objection can be made against the date, 587. But for 9b-12, the depopulation of Egypt for a period of forty years because of their arrogance, the case is not so clear. Arrogance comes within the range of Ezekiel's censure, but the forty years, deleted by many, belongs to the statistician. Here, however, it does not seem to have anything to do with the scheme of dates and may be an original message that has been worked over. Verses 13-16, the deporting of the Egyptians and confining their kingdom to Upper Egypt, would be meaningless in 587, and an appropriate date is by no means certain. The days of Manasseh, when there were pro-Egyptians in Jerusalem, and when the Assyrian armies had driven the Egyptians into the upper reaches of the Nile, would not be unreasonable. Or 528–525, when Cambyses brought the Egyptian Empire to its close, or it may be, that a much later date may ultimately prove acceptable. But it scarcely comes from Ezekiel. 29: 17-20, April 570 the prophet's apology for the failure of Nebuchadrezzar at Tyre, would be incomprehensible, apart from the accuracy of the message, and the date can scarcely be inaccurate. Verse 21 came from two hands; 21a is Messianic, and quite detached. Pure conjecture might add it to passages that indicate the hopes of Ezekiel for Jehoiachin (cf. 19: 5-9; 17: 22-24; 21: 27). As for 21b, it belongs to the material that explains the dumbness of the prophet (3: 26; 24: 25-27; 33: 21, 22).

30: 1-24, has five sections. 1-9, Egypt will be destroyed by Yahweh, has a corrupt text, is of mediocre quality, and is eschatological. It is more appropriate in the closing days of Amasis, with his allies, 528–525, than from the hand of Ezekiel in 570. Verses 10-12, though not vigorous are probably from Ezekiel, in 570, when Nebuchadrezzar was on the march to Egypt. Section 13-19 in which Yahweh destroys Egypt, is extremely vague; the text is corrupt—verses 13-15 cover the same ground as 16-18—and much, if not all, is due to the scribe. But in verses 20, 21 and 22-24 we again have our feet on the ground and are listening to Ezekiel. Verses 20, 21, Pharaoh's arm is shattered, celebrates the defeat of Hophra in 587; while 22-24, expresses the belief that Nebuchadrezzar will defeat the two parties in Egypt—both arms will be smashed.

Chapter 31 is dated June, 587 (1, 2a). 2b-9, a poem on Pharaoh as a glorious tree, and 10-14, haughtiness the cause of his fall, an interpretation of the poem, may well come from this date. Verses 15-18 send Pharaoh to Sheol. This is eschatological, with some grotesqueness and not much vigor, but it may come from the late days of Ezekiel's ministry.

Chapter 32 has two chronological notes each from 585; 2-8, Pharaoh a sea-monster, and 11-14, the annihilation of Egypt, both ring authentic. But 9, 10 are scribal rehash of 27: 29-36, while 15, 16 come from the religious editor. 32: 17-32, in large part a dirge over Egypt and the nations (18-24, 26-28), bears the stamp of the prophet; though later writers have added the touches they thought necessary, 17, 25, and have preserved some nondescript material, 29-32, that does no credit to anyone. While very little of this would have any significance in Babylonia, most of it would be vital to the interests of Jews in Palestine between 587 and 570.

III. 33: 1–39: 29. Preparations for National Reconstruction

In these seven chapters the foundations for national prosperity are laid, and the assurance of perpetual peace is given. Material of various types and from widely separated periods has been well arranged. Chapter 33: 1-33, the duties of the prophet; 34: 1-31, Yahweh, himself will be the good shepherd; 35: 1–36: 38, Palestine will be freed from the Edomite and the remnant of the nations, Israel will be cleansed and brought back to a fertile soil; 37: 1-28, the nation will be resurrected; and 38:1–39: 39, the armies of Gog and the northern nations will be smashed and plundered, and Israel will be permanently established in her own land, and " they shall know that I am Yahweh their God."

33: 1-33, the prophet as a watchman. 2-6, outline the watchman's duties, and 7-9 apply them to the prophet, is a recension of 3: 16b-21. 10-20 defends individualism, gives a résumé of 18: 1-31, while 13-17 is almost a duplicate of 18-20; and 24-29 declares that the newcomers who have taken up residence in the ruins of Jerusalem are unworthy of possession of the city. These evidently are messages from Ezekiel to the people in Jerusalem, verses 2-20 preceding the fall, and 24-29 probably within ten years from that date. 33: 21, 22 are editorial. The date (21) has no relation to the chapter, and the unnamed fugitive (22) is the creation of the editor, who failed to recognize that Ezekiel as watchman, in the preceding section, had duties in Jerusalem, the guilty city, that was punished, and ignored verses 24-29, where he was discussing the property claims of the recent squatters. The dumbness (22) is a continuation of 3: 26, 27; 16: 63; 24: 25, 26, and 29: 21b. For both date and dumbness see Introduction, pages xxii, xxiii.

34: 1-31. Yahweh, himself will be the good shepherd. 2b-10, unfaithful shepherds were the cause of the ruin; 11-16, now Yahweh himself will act; 23, 24, David being his assistant. This is all built up on Jeremiah 23: 1-6, and may be from the pen of Ezekiel, as part of his reconstruction program, wrought out between 580 and 570. Verses 25-31 are Messianic. Yahweh makes a covenant of peace with the land, and with a united people. It belongs to a considerable literature, the earliest of which may not have preceded Zechariah (520 B. C.). Verses 17-22, the settlement of sectional feuds by Yahweh, who is on the side of the poor, may not be earlier than 400 B. C.

35: 1–36: 7, Edom will be desolated is *in toto* late. This threat would naturally follow 25: 12-14, but comes here as a preface to 36: 8-38, the regeneration of the land, and is a mosaic of poor quality. 3b-6, is a recension of 7-11, and 14d reverts to 11a. Verses 12, 13 are an independent, worth-while oracle, breaking the connection fore and aft, and declaring that Yahweh, who is in the land, has heard all the reviling of the Edomites, is unconscious of Yahweh's flight from the city (10: 19; 11: 22). 36: 1-7, which is most prolix, introduces the remnant of the nations, almost parallel with Edom (3, 4, 5). Probably the phrase was intended for the Ammonites, Moabites and

Ashdodites, those settlers in the land in the Nehemiah-Ezra period, who along with Edom were a source of trouble to the Jews who were eager for reconstruction. The whole section is Palestinian and can scarcely be earlier than the end of the fifth century B. C.

36: 8-15, the land will be regenerated and will be the permanent possession of Israel, is a conglomerate of oft-repeated promises. 36: 16-21, the people scattered among the nations; 22-25, will be gathered back home; 29-32 and cleansed; 33-38, and will be ashamed, but the land will be fertile and the populace prolific. In this chapter the captivity was caused by "uncleanness" which defiled the land, and in the exile "my holy name" was profaned among the nations. Therefore Yahweh will show his power (20, 21, 35, 36), and will gather them out from foreign lands, cleanse them by approved ritual, make the soil miraculously productive, and the nation amazingly numerous, thereby proving that he has unlimited power. This differs greatly in phrase and idea from the prophetic, and is priestly and late.

Verses 26-28 that have been inserted between 25 and 29, breathe a different atmosphere. The ideal of the new heart, found earlier in 11: 19-21, and 18: 30-32, is the corollary of individualism (3: 18; 18: 1-20) and the antithesis of the priestly. This may be the only authentic part of the chapter, and belongs to the second period of Ezekiel's activity.

37: 1-28, the resurrection of Israel. Two themes are coordinated in this chapter. The first 37: 1-14, the bones in the valley are rejuvenated. This was a vision in the valley, in the vicinity of Jerusalem (3: 23a), and must have taken place within a few years of the destruction of the city. The dry bones were factual (2, 3), and the vision of their resuscitation expresses Ezekiel's confidence in Yahweh, the God of the people. The prophet of ruin has become the herald of hope. Verse 11 contains two comments, both correct, but neither adds anything to the original. Verses 12-14 present a different, though kindred topic, the resurrection of "my people" from their graves, or the return of the exiles from among the nations. This also was a vivid hope with Ezekiel, that could not come to expression until some time after 586.

37: 15-20 and 21-28, the second part of the chapter, continue the theme of the return. In 15-20, Joseph and Judah, each with its tribal affiliates, are to be united in the land of Yahweh. The symbolism of the two sticks amply illustrates the new, post-captivity of Ezekiel.

Verses 21-28 repeat the promise that Yahweh is gathering back a purified people, who will forever remain united, enjoying the covenant of peace (16: 60-62; 34: 25-31), under the rule of "my servant David" (34: 23, 24). Much of Ezekiel is here, but there is overmuch repetition (cf. 24 with 25, 23a with 27a, 26b with 27) and parts of it are overweighted by priestly epithets. Verse 24 continues 22, and 23 reads like a priestly addition. Chapter 39: 21-28, is the immediate continuation of this.

38: 1–39: 20, takes us into a different world, that of eschatology. The etchings of a few historical facts are seen in the background. Israel is now in her own land, living quietly, and without any military protection. This must have been well after 500, as there was no return in 539, nor were there any in Jerusalem other than the people of the land to respond to the appeal of Haggai and Zechariah for temple building in 520-518; nor after that signal failure was a rekindling of hope likely for at least a generation. A further fact is that hostile hordes from the wide, unknown regions of the far north were seen gathering on the horizon. This might have been almost any century in ancient history, and is indefinite. Gog, the central figure, is in part historical, but that history evades certainty. Gugu or Gyges, cryptic for Nebuchadrezzar or Alexander, or other, is a matter of speculation. But he is fundamentally mythological. The name, the slaughter effected supernaturally, the seven months and the seven years, the valley of " those who pass beyond " east of the sea, and the sacrificial feast, all belong to the realm that lies beyond history. Gog represents those dread, invisible powers that are the ultimate source of all evil and are in constant conflict with the good. That conflict, in mythology, would culminate in " the Day," when the forces of darkness would be marshaled for Armageddon, and God, commanding the superior forces, would forever annihilate the enemy. This section, apart from a few glosses (38: 5, 8a, 13, and doublets as 38: 2-4, and 39: 1, 2) is a unit, from the hand of an unknown dreamer who encouraged his people sometime after 500.

39: 21-29 belongs not to 38: 1–39: 20, but to the earlier chapter. The nations are still in existence and Yahweh is going to show his power to them, but he will have mercy on the whole house of Israel and never again turn his face away from them. Without anything fresh or arresting, it repeats the comforting hope of which Ezekiel was one of the early exponents.

For convenience the foregoing is summarized below. There is little uncertainty as to the date, place of origin, and authorship of many of the oracles; but for others, significant evidence is absent, and even a tentative solution is little more than a quest. The analysis at least arranges the messages that are similar in vocabulary and kindred in spirit in an easily accessible form. Guided by the probable date, and the general content, the material falls into four groups.

The first consists of those messages delivered by Ezekiel in Jerusalem preceding and during the siege of 588-586. In general, these were messages of doom against Judah and Jerusalem. Most of them are unequivocable as to both date and place of origin.

The second group of oracles consists of those belonging to the second stage of the prophet's activity, between 586 and 570. They fall into two divisions; the one the prophet's utterances against foreign nations, the other his messages of reconstruction. The earliest of each group may have preceded the fall of the city, but the bulk of them came later, and probably all were completed by 570. The separation between the authentic and the secondary material in these oracles is sometimes far from certain, as the activities of the disciples and the scribes have evidently somewhat blurred the lines.

The third strata is the work of the chief editor, who was largely responsible for the book as we now have it, and who for lack of a better term has been called the Babylonian editor. The larger part of his contribution seems to be as easily separated from Ezekiel as is a glove from the hand, and the cleavage between the two seems as complete as is that between P. and JE. Probably no part of this work was earlier than 550, and none of it much later than 500; but whether before or after 520, is in the balance, with the weight toward the later date.

The fourth element includes additions inserted after 500. These were united to the book because of similarity of theme, and ofttimes constitute a legitimate development of the original Ezekiel. This is especially true of ritualistic and eschatological material. Scribal additions continued until a comparatively late date—as is witnessed by a comparison of the texts of the Hebrew and the Greek—but the less significant ones are disregarded in this tabulation.

A gloss is enclosed in brackets. Doubtful authorship is indicated by an interrogation-point. Very doubtful authorship is shown by brackets and an interrogation-point. Chapter and verse division follows the American Revised version, where that differs from the Hebrew.

1. The earliest oracles from Ezekiel proclaim the doom of Judah and Jerusalem, between 593–586 B. C.

1: 4, 5a, 22ab, 26-28a.
2: 3-7 (cf. 3: 4-9), 8b–3: 3.
3: 16b-21 (cf. 33: 1-9), 22b, 23a.
4: 1-3, 9a-11, 16, 17 (4: 4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15 ?).
5: 1-4 (5-17 ?).
6: 1-7, 11-14.
7: 1-9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14-16, 19-27.
8: 5-18 (8).
11: 1b-13a (11b, 12).
12: 1-7, 8-15, 17-20, 21-25, 26-28.
13: 1-16 (7b, 9), 17-23 ?
14: 1-11.
15: 1-7.
16: 1-43, 44-52.
17: 1-21.
19: 2-14 (1, 9a, 14b).
20: 1-32 (in part 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24, 26).
20: 45–21: 23.
22: 1-16, 17-22, 30, 31.
23: 1-35.
24: 3b-14, 15-24 (18, 21b, 24).
33: 1-9 (cf. 3: 16b-21) 10-20 (cf. 18: 1-31).

2. The later oracles from Ezekiel; his denunciations of foreign nations.

26: 7-14, 17b, 18a.
27: 3b-9a, 25b-36.
28: 11-19 (11, 12a).
29: 3b-6a, 6b-9a (9b-12 ?), 17-20.
30: 10-12, 20, 21, 22-24.
31: 1-9 (1, 2), 10-14 (15-18 ?).
32: 2b-6, 7-10, 11-14, 18-24, 26-28.

2. The later oracles from Ezekiel; his hope for reconstruction.

6: 8-10.
9: 8-10a.
11: 13b-21.
12: 16.
14: 12-20, 21-23.
16: 53-58 ? (59-63 ?).
17: 22-24.
18: 1-20, 21-25 (cf. 26-29), 30-32.
20: 33-38, 39-44.
21: 24-27.
28: 25, 26 ?
33: 24-29, 30-33 ?
34: 2b-10, 11-16, 23, 24, 25-31 ?
36: 26-28.
37: 1-6, 7-10 (11), 12-14 (13b, 14), 15-20, 21-28 (23).
39: 25-29.

3. The contribution of the Babylonian editor.

1: 1b, 2a, 3, 5b-21, 22c-24 (25), 28b.
2: 1, 2.
3: 10-16a, 23b-27.
4: 4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15 ?
8: 1-3 (4).
9: 1-7, 10b, 11.
10: 2, 7, 1, 3-5 (6), 8-22.
11: 1a, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.
24: 1, 2, 25-27.
29: 1-3a, 21b.
31: 1, 2.
32: 1, 2a, 15, 16, 25.
33: 21, 22.
34: 1, 2a.

4. Scribal additions after 500 B. C.

13: 9.
15: 8.
21: 28-32.
22: 8, 23-29 ?
23: 36-49.
25: 1-7, 8-11, 12-14, 15-17.
26: 1-6, 15-18 (17b, 18a, earlier), 19-21.
27: 9b-25a.
28: 1-10, 20-23, 24.
29: 13-16.
30: 1-9, 13-19.
32: 29-32.
34: 17-22.
35: 1–36: 7.
36: 8-15, 16-21, 22-25, 29-32, 33-38.
38: 1–39: 20.

IV. 40: 1–48: 35. The New Jerusalem

This section concentrates on the reconstruction program, in which the temple occupies the center of interest. Neither is it a unit within itself, nor are the contents related to the foregoing division. Four main topics are presented: 40: 1–43: 27, a description of the new temple, is followed by 44: 1–46: 27, the regulations for officials and offerings; then 47: 1-23, the renewal of the land and the limit of its boundaries; and lastly, 48: 1-35, the tribal boundaries. It is all ritual.

40: 1-4, the superscription, which is intended for the whole section, makes direct contact with preceding chronology. Apart from 29: 17, this is the last date in the book, but it so definitely climaxes all that precedes that one wonders if this were not the point of departure for the whole chronological scheme. It is here that purposefulness appears. Much depends on the acceptance of this superscription, which implies authorship by a prophet, but little depends on any other date, save that of 29: 17. Other messages are supported by their content, this appeals to external authority (cf. 40: 4; 44: 5). However the chronology runs from here straight back to 1: 1-3, through 8: 1, and 33: 21. The dating is delightfully straightforward, but in no place more artificial than in these two verses. The minutely detailed appointments and ritual requirements of these nine chapters, are they the result of a supernatural vision that occupied only part of one day? No one gives credence to this, the implication of the writer. When read in the light of history and compared with other similar legislation, we see that they embody the toil and struggle of many minds through at least half a millennium.

That this scheme is purely artificial is further evident from its use of the tenth day of the first month. This was the day of departure from Egypt (Exod. 12: 2-14) and the day of entrance into Canaan (Josh. 4: 19)—according to the priestly scheme of things. This is scarcely an accident. The editor intelligently related this new departure to the ecclesiastical calendar, as his ancestors had synchronized earlier historic events. The language belongs to the Babylonian editor. The "captivity" is the password as in 1: 2 and 33: 21. The "hand of Yahweh was on me" is the idiom found in 1: 2; 3: 14; 8: 1; 33: 22 and 37: 1. Visions of God, or "supernatural visions," a favorite expression in editorial sections, and rarely found elsewhere, comes in 1: 1 and 8: 2, while "he brought me thither" is of frequent occurrence; and "that very day" (cf. 2: 3; 24: 2) is found elsewhere only in P. The idea also belongs to the late and the priestly cycle rather than to the prophet. Revelation coming through abnormal processes, the divine guide who furnishes information that is all pigeonholed, this removal of Deity far away from human contact, all witness to an era when the creative spirit was being hampered by the statutes and the torah (cf. 44: 5, 23, 24).

40: 5–42: 20. The description of the new temple, might be called the blue-print of an architect. It has no distinguishing literary features. While not impossible, one would not easily think of Ezekiel writing this, nor has it any similarity to the idiom of the Babylonian editor. Yet men of genius do sometimes have strange hobbies, and poets have been known to while away the idle hours with statistics.

But these chapters present a definite idea, found in much that follows, namely, that the whole community must be organized in an orderly way, and that the temple—or religion—must occupy the central and the loftiest place in social life; and that this must be controlled by properly constituted officials. If ofttimes the order and the measurements are tiresome, the general picture is vivid and compelling.

40: 5-47, is occupied with a description of the gateways, the chambers, and the outer and inner courts. 44-46 mentions the chambers of the priests separating the Zadokites from the Levites, thus preparing the way for a later discussion (43: 19; 44: 10-27), while verse 47, which is isolated, makes a passing remark about the altar (cf. 43: 13-17).

40: 48–41: 26. Description of the temple and the buildings in the immediate vicinity. 40: 48–41: 4, give the general measurements of the portico, the steps, the main building, the holy place, and the holy of holies—which the writer could not enter. 41: 5-11, the side-chambers; 12-15a, the general area; 15b-26, the ornamentation consisting of double-headed cherubim and palm trees.

42: 1-20. Description of other buildings. 1-12, priestly chambers; and 13, 14, their use; 15-20, measurement of the sacred area (cf. 45: 2).

43: 1-27 has two themes: 1-12, Yahweh's entrance into the temple, and 13-27, the altar and its dedication. The second section, 13-27, is independent and apparently late. Verse 13 hangs in the air; the explanation of the cubit indicates that it never belonged to 40: 47; the prevailing second person, a characteristic of the P. document; the introduction of the peace-offering (27), differing from 40: 39; the lack of indication of the place of the altar; failure to locate an appropriate place (21)—all suggest that this is a foreign fragment. Had it belonged to the original draft it surely would have been found following 40: 47. But the first part, 1-12, is different. It is true, verse 1, knows nothing of 42: 15, and verses 2-5 have nothing of the spirit of 40: 5–42: 20, but the hand throughout is that of the Babylonian editor, and it unmistakably is linked up with chapters 1: 1-3; 8: 1-4; 11: 22-24, etc. The same seems to be true of verses 6-12, though there are evidences of considerable reworking. Verses 10, 11a, hark back to the " pattern "; but the ordinances, the regulations, and " the law of the house," 11b, 12, look forward rather to 18-27.

44: 1–46: 24. Regulations concerning the temple. 44: 1-31, the accredited officials; 45: 1-17, their land allotments; 45: 18–46: 24, regulations of sacred seasons and offerings. 44: 1-3 is aware of the entrance of Yahweh through the east gate, in 43: 1-12, and in a very natural way continues this statement in 43: 4; part of the intervening material, 43: 5-12, which outlines the conditions under which Yahweh will remain on his throne in the temple, being from the theological editor. Both the idea and the linguistic idiom of the one differ from those of the others. In 43: 5-12 the entrance of Yahweh into the temple was the theme, here it is the sanctity of the gate, owing to the passing through of the glory of Yahweh. 44: 4a is the natural continuation of 40: 1–42: 20, while 44: 4b is akin to 43: 5-12, and 44: 4b-6 may be assigned to the same hand. Verses 7-14, the attitude toward foreigners and the service of the Levites; and 15-31, the honors, dress, duties, and dues of the Zadokites (cf. 40: 46; 42: 13, 14; 43: 19; 45: 4; 46: 2; 48: 10, 11) are all of priestly fabric. Regulations concerning personal habits (20-31) may be late appendices (so Hermann, Sellin, in part). But such regulations were being amended so constantly, and the insertion of such material was so easy, that the dates remain speculative.

45: 1-8, presupposes the boundaries of the twelve tribes, hence is dependent on 48: 1-8, 23-29, and is later. An area of eight and one-third miles by six and two-thirds is called the sacred tract, but 42: 20 tells us that the wall around the temple buildings, a square of 875 feet, separated the profane from the sacred, which hints at different authors. Verse 4 assigns a considerable territory to the priests, while in 44: 28 we are informed they shall have no landed possessions; and further, apart from 8b, all comes from the writer rather than from Yahweh. These indications favor independent authorship. 45: 9 is an aside to verse 8, while 10-12, weights and measures, may well be explanatory to 13, 14. As they now read 13-17 enumerated the donation to the prince; but the question is raised, Did this not originally follow 44: 30a, and apply to the priest rather than the prince? (17; so Hölscher, Hermann, Harford.) It is true that kings demanded and received usufruct, but when the kingship was in the past, why should the priest provide dues for him? Moreover this corresponds more or less accurately to what the priest did receive (42: 13, 14; Num. 18: 9; Lev. 2: 3, 10; 7: 9, 10; 10: 12; 6: 9).

45: 18–46: 10, sacred seasons, such as the days of atonement, passover, tabernacles, sabbaths, and new moons are provided for; 46: 11-15. Sacred offerings, freewill, and the daily, morning burnt-offering are regulated; all betray priestly ideals, with abundant evidence, such as the limited requirements for all of the offerings, the two days of the atonement, and the absence of an evening burnt-offering, that this represents an experimental stage in priestcraft preceding the P document.

46: 16-18. Real estate is entailed. This also is an orphan, and it may well be that it represents a restoration project that originated in the period of the exile (Nicolsky, *Z. A. W.*, 1932, 216).

46: 19-24. The description of the kitchens, those of the priests (19, 20), and those of the people (21-24), is an appendix that displays all the characteristics of 40: 5–42: 20 and may at one time have been a part of the survey. Verses 21-24 very appropriately could follow 40: 17, while 19, 20 add essential details to 42: 13, 14.

47: 1–48: 35. The land of Palestine, its fertilization, boundaries and divisions. 47: 1-12 is an independent, eschatological section, not related to the context nor to reality, and only slightly to Jerusalem. Local features, such as the Siloam pool, the Kidron valley, the wady en-Nari—that flows into the Dead Sea some five miles south of Ras Feshkah—only apparently attach the stream to the soil. Most of the descriptions fall short of accuracy, and if the city were placed within the tribal boundaries (48: 1-7, 23-29) none of the physical features would be possible. But while the vision draws from mythology—the sacred streams in the garden, visited by Yahweh (Gen. 2: 10-14)—it reaches out to a future in which Yahweh, through the temple, will redeem the hardest soil and cleanse the most unwholesome waters, replacing barrenness by abundance and beauty.

47: 13-20, the boundary of the land, has no relation with the preceding, but may be part of the land divisions (48: 1-7, 23-29). That this is from the same source as 40: 4–42: 20; 44: 4-17, 19, is uncertain. The Hebrew idiom differs, as for example, each has its own word for south; also the "sacred land" in 42: 20 is quite different from that in 48: 8. The boundary lines (47: 13-20) are essentially the same, even to phrasing, as those in Numbers 34: 3-12, which is the better recension; though it would be difficult to say it is the later. In either case we are reading late theory.

The same is true of the tribal divisions. But here, our information concerning the history of individual tribes, such as Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Issachar and Naphtali, is too scant to suggest a definite date for authorship.

48: 8-22, the sacred tract, is a more complete description than that in 45: 1, 3-8, though in all essentials they are the same, one having copied the other. It seems that here the Zadokites are only part of the Jerusalem priesthood (11), not as in 44: 15, but more akin to P., hence probably late (Hölscher, 210).

48: 30-35, the city gates, with the wall measurements as marginal glosses, belongs to the same strata as 48: 8-22, and may even have preceded verse 20.

The editor, with a measure of felicity, placed 47: 1-12, a stray piece, as an introduction to the boundaries, 47: 13-20, and the tribal divisions, 48: 1-7, 23-29, which for the sake of order he divided, inserting a description of the sacred tract, which comes from a different source, between Judah (7) and Benjamin (23), and appended 30-35, the city gates, with the dramatic watchword, which appropriately closes not only these two chapters, but the whole of the division 40-48, YAHWEH SHAMMAH.

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The above bibliography includes most of the important contributions to the study of Ezekiel that have been made within recent decades. Beyond this, however, there is much that is valuable, to some of which an occasional reference has been made in the commentary.*

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* Two important commentaries appeared after this volume was in the press. Bertholet published a significant revision of his 1897 commentary. He no longer considers the book of Ezekiel a unit, and influenced by recent writers has largely reconstructed it. G. A. Cook has completed the commentary in the International Critical Commentary Series, in two volumes, in which he presents a wealth of critical material. It is a regret to the writer that he has been unable to avail himself of the contributions and judgments of these contemporary volumes.

ABBREVIATIONS

NAMES OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Gen.	Genesis.	Jer.	Jeremiah.
Exod.	Exodus.	Lam.	Lamentations.
Lev.	Leviticus.	Ezek.	Ezekiel.
Numb.	Numbers.	Dan.	Daniel.
Deut.	Deuteronomy.	Hos.	Hosea.
Josh.	Joshua.	Hab.	Habakkuk.
Judg.	Judges.	Zeph.	Zephaniah.
Sam.	Samuel.	Zech.	Zechariah.
Chron.	Chronicles	Mal.	Malachi.
Neh.	Nehemiah.	Sir	Ben. Sirach.
Ps.	Psalms.	Mac.	Maccabees.
Prov.	Proverbs.	Matt.	Matthew.
Cant.	Canticles.	Cor.	Corinthians
Isa.	Isaiah.	Rev.	Revelation.

GENERAL

A. J. S. L.	*American Journal of Semitic Languages.*
A. T.	*Alte Testament.*
A. V.	Authorized Version.
c.	With.
cf.	Compare.
chap.	Chapter.
crit. n.	Critical note.
Com.	Commentary.
D.	Deuteronomic Document.
dl.	Delete.
dittog.	Dittography.
E.	E Document.
Esp.	Especially.
E. V.	English Version.
G. V. I.	*Geschichte des Volkes Israel.*
Herod.	The Histories of Herodotus.
H. U. C. A.	*Hebrew Union College Annual.*
Harv. Theol. Rev.	*Harvard Theological Review.*
introd.	Introduction.
J.	J Document.
J. B. L.	Journal of Biblical Literature.
Jos. Bel. Jud.	Josephus Wars of the Jews.
Jour. Th. Stud.	*Journal of Theological Studies.*

L.	Read.
L. O. T.	*Introduction to the Literature of the O. T.*
LXX.	Septuagint.
MT.	Massoretic text.
no.	Number,
O. T.	Old Testament.
P.	Priest Code.
P. E. F. Q.	Palestine Exploration Find Quarterly.
Philo.	Works of Philo Judæus, Translation by C. D. Yonge, 1857.
pl.	Plural.
q. v.	"Which see."
R. B.	*Revue Biblique.*
R. V.	Revised Version.
Stud. u. Krit.	*Studien und Kritiken.*
viz.	Namely.
vs.	Verse.
vss.	Verses.
Vers.	Versions.
Z. A.	*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie.*
Z. A. W.	*Zeitschrift für die A. T. Wissenschaft.*
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Rothstein	Rothstein, *Das Buch Ezechiel.*
Smend	Smend, *Der Prophet Ezechiel.*
Smith	Smith, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.*
Torrey	Torrey, *Pseudo-Ezekiel.*
Toy	Toy, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.*

EZEKIEL

The book of Ezekiel has four main divisions, each with numerous subdivisions. The chief divisions are:

I. 1:1–24:27. Doom on Jerusalem and Judah.

II. 25:1–32:32. Destruction of Foreign Nations.

III. 33:1–39:29. Restoration of Israel.

IV. 40:1–48:35. Reconstruction of the New Religious Community, a State-Church.

THE FIRST MAIN DIVISION

1:1–24:27. Doom on Jerusalem and Judah.

DIVISION I. SECTION (a). 1:1–3:27

The Preparation of the Prophet

These 3 chapters have at least 10 distinct sections. A casual reading convinces one that the material comes from different periods and probably from different pens. A considerable part of it, particularly in the 1st chapter, might be called inventory prose, but here and there is the imagery and the throb of the poet (note espc. 1:4, 28). The superscription, 1:1-3, has been edited and reedited, and few verses in these chapters are free from convincing evidence of scribal activity. The Hebrew text itself, which is very corrupt, is ample proof of this; but a comparison of the Hebrew with the early translations is conclusive. Chapter 2:1-8a is parallel to 3:4-9, while 3:22b, 23a is quite unrelated to its present context. Add to these features the too frequent repetition of conventional phrases, and *he said to me*, and *he spake to me*, and *the spirit entered into me*, and *the spirit lifted me up*, and *the hand of Yahweh was upon me*, and we cannot fail to recognize that these chapters are the result of much editorial revision.

One theme alone, the preparation of the prophet, gives them coherence. The following analysis is a suggested reorganization of the material:

1. The prophet's vision, 1:1-28a.
    Place and date, 1:1-3.
    The call of Yahweh, 3:22b, 23a.
    The vision from Yahweh; the original poem, 1:4, 5a, 22ab, 26-28a; the theological explanation, 1:5b-21, 23-25.

2. The prophet's audience, 2:1-8a; 3:4-9. A rebellious house. Parallel statements.
    Theological addenda, 3:10-16a.

3. The prophet's inspiration, eating the roll, 2:8b–3:3.

4. The prophet's responsibility, 3:10-27.
    His duty as a watchman, 3:16b-21.
    The prophet in the valley, 3:22b, 23a.
    Theological addenda, 3:23b-27.

1:1 And it happened in the thirtieth year,
on the fifth day of the fourth month,
and I was in the midst of the captivity
by the canal Chebar,[1] the heavens
were opened and I saw supernatural
2 visions. On the fifth of the month,—it

THE CALL AND COMMISSION OF THE PROPHET

Chapter 1:1-28a

1:1-3. THE SUPERSCRIPTION shows the work of a number of interpreters. The 3 statements of the call of the prophet, *I saw supernatural visions, the word of Yahweh came to* Ezekiel, and *the hand* of *Yahweh was upon him,* or *on me* as in the Septuagint, the interchange of 1st and 3d personal pronouns, and the 2 distinct sets of dates betray the scribes (cf. Introd., xv).

The 30th year (vs. 1) in itself, gives no information. From what date did the scribe reckon? If from the reformation of king Josiah in 621 B. C., as suggested in the Targum, it would give us 591, which is not in strict harmony with verse 2. Or does it, as held by Origen and more recently defended by Budde and Bewer (A.J.S.L. 1934, 96-101) refer to the age of the prophet, the year of his life when normally he should have entered the priesthood? Arguments for this assume that he was in Babylonia, for which there is little evidence in the body of the book itself. Or is it dated from the beginning of the reign of Manasseh, as supported by Smith and Torrey? Well-wrought arguments may be presented for any one of these hypotheses, but the conclusion remains only a probability (cf. Introd. xiv).

The 5th day of the 4th month, would be toward the end of July, which was the month of Tammuz. This is, following the Babylonian system in which the year began in the spring, their 1st month coming within March-April. In earlier literature the O. T. follows the Canaanitish calendar, which was nomadic in its origin and began in the autumn. Because of the persistent influence in Israel of festivals that originally were nomadic and agricultural, this early Canaanitish calendar is the one used by late priestly writers.

The captivity by the canal Chebar, was that of 597, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, deported some 10,000 captives from the leaders of Jerusalem, and settled them in various places in Babylonia (2 Kings 24:10-16). King Jehoiachin was among them, and the 5th year (2) would be 593. The canal Chebar ran between the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers, near Nippur, a little to the south of Babylon. The course of such a canal, identified as KBR by inscribed bricks, was discovered by an archæological expedition from the University of Pennsylvania in 1903.

The heavens were opened, indicates that he gained a glimpse into the divine secrets, and is used in this sense only here in the O. T. In the interbiblical and New Testament literature it is used some 6 times. "Visions of God" (1:1; 8:3; 40:2), refers to the quality of the vision, not to the object of it, hence supernatural or divine visions, is the better translation. It is a rare expression, but is meaningful.

The 5th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, would be 593 B. C. This phrase is important because of its definiteness, but is difficult to bring into agreement with "the 30th year." This chronology is introductory, and, at best, suggests only the beginning of the activity of the prophet. It is not applicable even to all of the material gathered together in the first chapter (cf. Introd. xiv).

The Word of Yahweh (3), like thus saith the Lord and oracle of Yahweh, is throughout the O. T. a common expression for the inspiration of a prophet. In every case the personal religious experience of the man plays an important rôle. Visions came only to men of certain temperament and history. Priests expressed their teaching in priestly forms, while only poets were able to write poetry.

was the fifth year of the captivity of
3 King Jehoiachin,—the word of Yahweh
came to Ezekiel, the son of Buzi,
the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans,
and the hand of Yahweh was upon him
there.[2]

While I was looking, lo! coming
4 from the north was a storm wind, having
in it [3] a great cloud, with a zigzagging
fire, a radiance ensheathing
it, and from the midst of it, was like
5a the gleam of amber. And amid the
fire . . .[4] was like four living creatures.

5b And this was their appearance, having
the appearance of a man over
6 them;[5, 6] each one had four faces,
and each one had four wings (to
7 them).[7] Their feet were the feet of
oxen,[8] and their hoofs were round [9]
8 and shining like burnished bronze. And
the hands of a man [10] were under
their wings, on the sides of the four of
them. As for their faces and their
9 wings: to four of them,[11] their wings
joined each other, without turning as
they went, each one went straight ahead.
10 As to the appearance of their faces: all
four had in front [12] the face of a
man, all four had on the right side the
face of a lion, all four had the face of
an ox on the left, and all four had the
11 face of an eagle behind.[13] (And their
faces) [14] And their wings were separated
above, to each one a pair was
joined to its fellow,[15] and a pair covered
12 its body. And each one went
straight ahead, whither the spirit would
have them go, they went, not turning as
13 they went. Now in the midst [16] of
the living creatures, was an appearance
[17] like glowing coals of fire,
(like the appearance of torches),[18]
zig-zagging between the living creatures,
and there was a sheen to the fire, and
lightning flashed forth from the fire.
14 (Now the living creatures to run and to
return like the appearance of . . .).[19]

The hand of Yahweh was on him, or as it is in the Greek on me, is frequently used in Ezekiel (cf. 1:3; 3:14, 22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1). Used similarly in Amos 7:15, 1 Kings 18:46, Isa. 8:11, 15:17, Jer. 20:7, it suggests the presence of the divine spirit with constraining power. By some it has been interpreted as expressing ecstasy (cf. Introd. ix). All such phrases were used on all sorts of occasions and by all sorts of people, and so have different meanings when used by different individuals.

Ezekiel, means God will strengthen. The meaning of Buzi, which only occurs here as a proper name, is uncertain. The present form in the Hebrew might mean my contempt, a strange, but not impossible name for a Hebrew child. Or it may be an abbreviation for, the contempt of Yahweh; or more likely an abbreviation of another form, Baal is strong.

Beyond this statement there is nothing known of the priesthood of Ezekiel; yet there is no doubt that one of priestly inclinations had much to do with our present book.

The Chaldeans, or Neo-Babylonians, belonged to the southern part of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. In the closing years of the 8th century—the time of the ascendency of the Assyrian world empire—a Chaldean leader, Merodach-Baladan by name, had led his people in rebellion against their overlord (Isa. 39:1-8); not until 626, however, was the empire of these people established under Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar.

1:4, 5a, 22ab, 26-28a. THE VISION OF THE THUNDER STORM is a poem. To recognize that imbedded in the prose of this chapter there is a poem, is one thing; to disentangle it, is another; while indicating the original poetic movement in a translation adds further difficulties. It is almost certain that in the translation some scribal accretions have been preserved; it is also probable that a part of the original poem has not been retrieved. Yet there is a fair degree of certainty that the substance of the original is herein preserved.

What is here described was an actual experience. A black storm was raging in the distant north, lightning flashes illuminated the ever-changing background,

15 Then I looked (the living creatures) [20] and lo! there was a wheel on the ground beside the living creatures, to each of
16 the four of them.[21] And the appearance [22] of the wheels (and their construction) [23] was like Tarshish stone. The four of them had the same form, and (their appearance and) [24] their construction was as though one wheel
17 were within another. In whatever direction their four sides faced (when they went) [25] they went, turning not
18 when they went. (As for their felloes, they were high and dreadful).[26] Also the felloes of the four of them were
19 filled all around with eyes, and when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them, and when the living creatures rose up from the earth, the
20 wheels rose up. Wherever the spirit would go, they went. (Where the spirit was to go, also the wheels rose up with them),[27] for the spirit of the living
21 creatures was in the wheels. When they went, these went; when they stood, these stood; when they rose up from the earth, the wheels rose up with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

the splendor of the sun-disk broke through, and the many-colored rainbow arched the scene; fantastic cloud forms, momentarily assuming animal shapes, moved across the stage, while above the bow the sun-light clouds threw on the field of vision the form as of a man seated on a throne. Such may suggest the phenomena the prophet actually saw.

Nothing in this picture is foreign to Palestinian experience. Similar features may be noted in literature, the origin of which without question belongs to the Holy Land (cf. Ps. 18: 9-15; 29: 3-9). But the seeing eye and the understanding heart belong to the author.

With the writings of his people Ezekiel was familiar. More than a century earlier Isaiah had had a vision of Yahweh, high and lifted up above the six-winged creatures that hovered over the temple altar. To him the whole earth was full of the glory of Yahweh. This expression of Isaiah was part of Ezekiel's culture (cf. Isa. 6: 1-13 with this poem). No wonder, then, that in the storm-cloud and rainbow the young prophet saw the radiance and heard a voice. Steeped in the religious lore of his people, eagerly wistful for a personal experience with God, the natural phenomena were fit media for the heavenly vision.

The original poem was simple and brief. Few strokes were used to sketch the background and the central figure. Details were toned down by general phrases, but the motif is definite and arresting. This is the appearance of Yahweh. The poem was worthy of a place alongside of Isa. 6: 1-13, and in spirit and in expression the writer belongs to the prophetic succession. Not unnaturally, this was interpreted by a scribe, whose clarifications have sometimes obscured the text (1: 5b-21, 23-25; cf. below).

The storm-cloud was a peculiarly appropriate symbol of Yahweh, because of the wide-spread conception that clouds, whirlwinds, thunder-storms and phenomena of the sky in general were manifestations of spirits and deities inhabiting the air and the sky. Not infrequently does the O. T. make use of this idea to express the presence and the power of Yahweh. Poetic imagery has thus used primitive mythology to express the nobler conceptions of God. Yahweh sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth, as an expression of his wrath against Egypt (Exod. 9: 23). He spoke in the earthquake and the rain-storm at Sinai (Judg. 5: 4, 5). The thunder-storm and the earthquake were his glory; he bowed the heavens and came down; he rode on a cherub and did fly (Ps. 29: 3-9; 104: 2-4). But no other passage is so akin, in phrase and thought, to this poem as is Ps. 18: 9-14; at least there is a common background to the two.

The north, which in mythology was the abode of the Babylonian deities, need not here be overemphasized. From the north also came the invaders (Jer. 1: 13, 15; 6: 1, 22; Joel 2: 20), and this was the

22 And over the head [28] of the living creatures [29] was something like [30] a burnished crystal dome;

(fearful) [31] (stretched out over their
23 heads above).[32] And under the dome their wings were spread out,[33] each to his fellow. To each one were two, covering (to them, and each had two covering to them) [34] their backs.
24 Then I heard the sound of their wings as they moved, like the sound of many waters, (like the voice of the Almighty, like the sound of a tumult, like the sound of an army),[35] but when they stood [36] they folded their wings.
25 (And there was a voice from the dome that was over their heads, when they stood they folded their wings).[37]

26 And above the dome that was over their heads, like the appearance of sapphire, was something like a throne; and on the likeness of a

home of the thunder-storm. The dwelling-place of Yahweh in early days was in the south, at Sinai, whence came his people (Judg. 5: 4; Deut. 33: 2; Hab. 3: 3; Ps. 68: 8). No doubt some Hebrew writers adapted their theological ideas to those of their masters (cf. Ezek. 38: 6, 15; Isa. 14: 13); but it is unnecessary to bring such a suggestion into this passage.

Two features in the closing part of the poem should be noted. Great care is taken to remove Yahweh as far as possible from any material image. He was seated on the *likeness* of a throne and his form looked like the *appearance* of a man (26), all of which was like the appearance of fire (27). So far as possible, Yahweh was removed from the material and conceived of as a spiritual being. It should also be noted that here God is compared to man. This is the reverse of Gen. 1: 27, where man is made in the image of God. This is an effort to describe the indescribable.

The 2d feature, is the result of the experience. The prophet falls on his face, hears a voice (1: 28) and receives his commission (2: 8b–3: 3), all of which, while original, presents a close parallel to Isaiah 6: 1-13.

1: 5b-21, 23-25. THE CHERUBIM CHARIOT, is a scribal interpretation of the above poem, and moves in an entirely different world. From the swift movement of the poet we pass to the lumbering gait of the mechanic. Vision and thrill are gone and an elaborately constructed chariot, bizarre in the extreme, is made the symbol of theological speculation. It is a tedious piece of Hebrew, due partly to the interest of the writer and partly to the later scribal explanations incorporated in the text.

If, however, the literary quality is lacking, the ideas presented are worthy. The same general teaching is found later in 10: 1, 3-6, 8-17, which comes from the same writer (cf. Introd. xv, xxvi).

The thought underlying this elaborate mechanism is simple. The 4 living creatures (called cherubim in 10: 1, 15, 20), each with the body and the feet of an ox; each with four heads—that of a man, an ox, a lion and an eagle; each with two pairs of wings—one pair covering the body and the other for flying—were the common symbols throughout Babylonia for 4 of their chief deities. Huge figures such as those described above, cut in stone, stood in front of palaces and temples, and were symbols of the guardian deities. The bull colossus, with ox-face, was the symbol of Marduk; that with the lion-face was Nergal, the god of the underworld and of plague; that of the eagle was Ninib, god of the chase and of war; while the human face represented Nabu, the announcer or revealer. Each one of these in Babylonia had a long and varied history. With the changing phases of national and city life, the prestige and the functions of the various deities changed. These 4 were chief in their pantheon at this time, and may be considered as representing all the gods of that empire. This whole section has been incorporated into the earlier poem in such a way as to make these deities subservient to Yahweh, who is seated on his throne over their heads. This conception, making

throne, was an appearance like a man;

27 (on it) [38] (and I saw like the gleam of amber, like the appearance of fire within it round about), [39]

Yahweh the God of the captive Jews supreme over the gods worshiped by the conqueror, is a daring one.

Perhaps even more daring is the well-wrought-out theory that these gods are living creatures. They are not sticks and stones, to be laughed at as are the idols in Deutero-Isaiah, (Isa. 40:18-20; 42:6, 7; 44: 9-17), but they were living; they moved their wings, went forward and backward, and the spirit controlled them. It is true that in all respects they were the servants of Yahweh, under him and no doubt doing his every behest; but that a Jew should concede that Babylonian deities were alive, is food for thought. The scribe, no doubt, had long been familiar with the massive images, representing various characteristics of deity—such as virility and vigor, intelligence, war and the chase, disaster and death—that were found everywhere in the country. He had found that the Babylonian worship, though very elaborate, at base had many similarities with that of his own people; and he had probably met some Babylonians who were better than some Hebrews with whom he was acquainted. He saw that as a nation they had prospered and had achieved a world empire. This, according to Hebrew theories, was evidence of the presence and favor of God (Deut. 28: 1-35). Thus it would be difficult for a thoughtful Jew not to believe that their gods were alive and powerful. But beyond this, he had his Hebrew inheritance. He had been taught that Yahweh not only controlled Israel but exercised jurisdiction over other nations as well (cf. Amos 1, 2; Isa. 10: 5-14). Indeed Yahweh had chosen Nebuchadnezzar, as his servant, to accomplish his purpose over Israel (Jer. 25: 9; 27: 16-22; 43: 8-13). From this it was but a short step to the conclusion that Yahweh ruled over the deities that ruled over other nations.

Further, to the native of Jerusalem, the cherubim occupied a familiar place in religious belief and practice. An early tradition made them guardians of the garden of Eden (Gen. 3: 24). From olden days the throne of Yahweh was above the cherubim (cf. 2 Sam. 6: 2; 2 Kings 19: 15), and the God of Israel rode a cherub and did fly (2 Sam. 22: 11; Ps. 18: 11). Figures of two colossal cherubim occupied the sacred place in the temple of Solomon and were over the ark of the covenant (1 Kings 6: 23-35; 8: 6, 7), and the walls of the temple were ornamented with similar figures (1 Kings 6: 29-35). Cherubim were thus figures familiar to every pious citizen of Jerusalem. To build the symbols of Babylonian deities into the old pattern of Hebrew religion was a natural and easy task for an exile. Thus, out of his inherited Hebrew religion, and the religious environment in the captivity, this interpreter forged a synthesis, in which Babylonian gods were recognized to be real, with Yahweh supreme over all. While we might easily find weakness in this reconstructed pantheon, we must appreciate the significance for true religion that is presented in the main features of this theology. A religion can be universal only by appropriating that which is vital in other religions.

Neither the origin nor the meaning of the word cherubim is certain. The old derivation from *griffon, dragon,* is not sure, though it is attractive. The Assyrian *kurubu,* means might, while the verb *karabu* means to bless. This philological uncertainty may indicate the antiquity of the word, and the vital part such mythological, syncretistic creatures played in the early religion of Semitic folk in general. Even the N. T. avails itself of this symbolism (cf. Rev. 4: 6-9).

But other important lessons are certainly intended by this author. That Yahweh was all-seeing is a legitimate con-

from the appearance of his loins and
upwards, and from the appearance of
his loins and downwards, I saw like
the appearance of fire, a radiance
28 around him. Like the appearance of
the bow that is in the cloud on the
day of downpour, so was the appearance of the radiance round about.

It had the appearance of something

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clusion from the four faces, facing in the four directions, and the many eyes that were in the felloes of the wheels (8-10, 18). Omnipresence of Deity is probably the thought presented in the fact that the chariot was able to move at lightning speed in any direction, without turning. But the omnipotence of Deity is the principle emphasized above all others. This is in the original poem no less than in the theological interpretation. It was thus a message of great comfort for Jews at home or abroad, during the period of the exile and later.

This symbolism may have been intended to bear many other lessons. The wings, the hand under the wings, the four different heads, the bull body and calves' feet, the amber, the topaz, the sapphire, the chariot, the wheels, and the wheels within wheels, may each have symbolized something explicit to the author. But no key has been handed down to us, and the exploitation of details is not profitable.

The composition of *amber* or electron (4) is uncertain, while topaz (16) and sapphire (26) are the well-known stones. The glowing coals of fire (13) indicate that the cherubim were thought of as over an altar. The influence of Isaiah, chapter 6, is everywhere apparent. The wheel within a wheel may indicate that they were at right angles one to the other. But a perfect reconstruction of the chariot and the animals on it has not yet been made, and it is doubtful if it can be made so that it would work. The general outline is clear. It is a throne wagon, carrying the Babylonian deities, over whom Yahweh sits in his glory.

The glory of Yahweh, as a phrase, had a history. At an earlier period it was equated with the ark of the covenant (1 Sam. 4: 21, 22). Here it is used theologically and is an effort to symbolize the glory that lay behind the physical phenomena, and but dimly revealed the eternal and the omnipotent God. The glory of God is not so much in the outer world as in the inner world of spirit. In the same sense this phrase occurs in 8: 4; 9: 3; 10: 19; 11: 22; 43: 2. In later writings the same phrase is used for the manifestation of God to his servant.

I fell on my face (28) expresses profound reverence on the part of the prophet in the presence of Yahweh. Only such a mind is prepared for further revelation. One would expect such a vision to be followed by strong emotional reaction, but the language gives no suggestion of a nervous collapse or an attack of catalepsy. Language that can be so construed is found in the more artificial parts of the book.

Chapter 2:1-8a; 3:4-9

2: 1-8a. THE PROPHET COMMISSIONED TO GO TO THE REBELLIOUS HOUSE OF ISRAEL. Mortal man, or son of man, which is the literal translation, is used about 100 times in this book, and in no other place in the O. T., save Dan. 8: 17—which is dependent on this passage. The Aramaic equivalent in Dan. 7: 13 has an entirely different meaning. Throughout Ezekiel the term is used for man in his feebleness, over against deity in his strength and majesty. It is man who is dependent on and is the servant of God. Mortal man, or even better, weak mortal man most adequately expresses the idea of the Hebrew. Quite different interpretations have been suggested. The same phrase was used in Babylonia a thousand years earlier, for "free man," as over against "slave." But the Ezekiel contexts rule out this meaning. Christian interpreters, uninterested in the exact meaning of the word, have occasionally tried to find in it a Messianic decla-

like the glory of Yahweh. When I saw, I fell on my face.

And I heard a voice speaking,

2:1 And he said to me, Mortal man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.
2 Then the spirit entered into me (even as he spoke to me)[1] and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.[2]

3 And he said to me, Mortal man I am sending you to the rebellious house of Israel,[3] which has rebelled against me, both they and their fathers. (They have transgressed against me)[4] even
4 to this day. (Also their children are

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ration and have linked it up to the similar phrase in the N. T. Needless to say, the book of Ezekiel gives no support to this exegesis.

I *will speak to* you, *the spirit entered into me*, and *I heard him speaking* are among the conventional phrases that are used to convey the idea of inspiration. As indicated by the futile gloss *even as he spake to me*, such phrases were easily inserted.

The word *spirit* has a varied use in the O. T. Breath, wind, air, vigor, temper, courage, strength, disposition, side or direction, mind and spirit are among its meanings. Many of these are found in Ezekiel. It is equivalent to wind (1:4; 13:11; 17:10; 19:12; 27:26), and direction (37:9; 42:16, 17, 18, 19, 20), and mind (3:4; 11:5; 13:3; 20:32; 21:12), and moral nature (11:19; 18:31; 36:26, 27), and it is used for the spirit of God (3:12, 14, 24; 8:3; 11:15, 24; 37:1; 43:5). It is in this last sense that the word is used in vs. 2, and some have contended that *vigor* or strength would give good sense, implying that the recipient of the spirit had been physically incapacitated (cf. Introd. ix).

Vss. 3 to 7 present the audience to the prophet and call on him to be fearless. Be not terrified at their words, speak my words whether they listen or refuse (6, 7). Courage is needed when one faces an unpleasant and thankless task. This is similar in expression and idea to the call of Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4-10). Behind such words lie the experiences of the prophets for more than two centuries. The people had been rebellious, and tradition tells us that they had been disloyal to Yahweh from the early days in affairs of ritual (cf. Exod. 32:2-8; Josh. 24:14, 15; 1 Kings 12:28, 30; 18:21-24). From the eighth century on, the prophets had consistently charged them with the violation of the fundamental ethical principles (Amos 2:6-8; 4:1-3; 6:21-24; Hosea 4:1, 2; 6:5-9; Micah 6:6-8; Jer. 7:23-26; Isa. 5:1-8). At times they had opposed the prophets (Amos 7:10-13; Micah 2:6) and had heaped indignities on them (Jer. 20:2; 26:8; 38:6), sometimes plotting their death (Jer. 11:18-23; 26:2-23) or even actually accomplishing it (Jer. 26:23). Such disloyalties had long been rebuked as rebellion, but Ezekiel finds the phrase *rebellious house* specially to his liking (2:5, 6, 7, 8; 3:9, 26, 27; 12:2, 3, 9, 25; 17:12; 24:3; 44:6). It is found in no other O. T. book.

The people are further characterized as thorns, briers, and scorpions (6). As such, they pierce and sting and make life miserable. These phrases have seemed too far-fetched for some interpreters and following the Syriac translation, Cornill and others read, "and they resist you and despise you, and you must live in the midst of scorpions." While this gives good sense, the Hebrew is to be preferred.

Ezekiel's orders are not conditioned on the reception given either to him or to his message. Whether they listen or refuse to listen, is not his responsibility. Later, this idea is fully developed (3:16b-21; 14:12-21; 33:1-9). This unswerving loyalty in the proclamation of his message was to be proof to the people that he was a prophet. The emphasis in these vss. (5, 7) is not that they shall know that a prophet is in their midst. Never until late days did they lack prophets, in Palestine and in Babylonia (cf. Jer. 29:15-23). But

hard faced and hard hearted, I am sending
you to them).[5] So say to them,
5 thus says (Lord) Yahweh, (and
these)[6] whether they listen or refuse
to listen, for they are a rebellious
house, yet they shall learn that you [7]
6 are a prophet in their midst. And you,
mortal man, neither fear them, nor be
terrified at their words, though thorns
and briers are round you, and among [9]
scorpions you are dwelling. (Fear not
because of their words, nor be terrified

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with the Septuagint and the Syriac translations we should read, "they shall learn that you are a prophet."

Be not *rebellious* as addressed to Ezekiel seems strange (8a). It is a good injunction in general, but it does not fit in to the attitude of this prophet. One wonders if it is an echo of the life of Jeremiah, who was given to raising questions, if not to actual rebellion (cf. Jer. 1: 6; 12: 1-4; 20: 7-10). It surely is going too far to explain it as part of a mental ailment that functioned in his prophesying. It may be the word of a preacher, but not of the prophet.

Chapter 2: 8b–3: 3

2: 8b–3: 3. THE INSPIRATION OF THE PROPHET naturally follows 2: 3-7, or its parallel 3: 4-10. Earlier, Yahweh had spoken to him, he had listened to the words and pondered their meaning (cf. 3: 9). His mind was fired by a strange consciousness. He was to be a prophet, and from time to time Yahweh would speak to him. Now he is to eat a roll. That was different. In chapters two and three, we have not the experience of a few days, or even of a year, but more likely the crystallized processes of a lifetime.

Rolls, or books, were not uncommon by this time in Israel and scribism was a profession. Early sections of the law were well known, particularly by the temple officers. The writings of Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah were extant, and probably some or all of them were accessible to those specially interested. Deuteronomy had been the common property of the leaders since 621 B. C., and Ezekiel shows familiarity with the principles of this "Book of the Law." Jeremiah, as early as 603, had had Baruch write a second edition of his sermon-poems (Jer. 36: 27-32). Ezekiel, though not a mere imitator, was well acquainted with the phrases and the ideas of his contemporaries and predecessors.

That the roll was to be eaten and digested, was of course symbolic. Jeremiah, his older contemporary, uses the same figure of speech (Jer. 15: 16). It is not probable that it is to be equated with any or all of the existing rolls at that time. More likely, it is identified with the will of Yahweh. He gives it. It is not something that is brought out of the temple archives. Yahweh holds it in his hand and reaches it down to his servant. It is the divine message. This may be the basis for the later theory of revelation, that all was written in heaven, in the eternal decrees, from before the foundation of the world; but it is not that theory. The parchment was completely filled on both sides with dirges, lamentations and woes. It was a message for that day, and was one of doom for Israel.

It was bitter, but the prophet must eat and digest it. Lamentable as it was, doing the will of the supreme being was sweet. This idea was later borrowed by the author of Revelation (Rev. 10: 9, 10).

In noting the emphasis, even symbolically, placed on a written roll as a source of inspiration, we must remember that to the Oriental mind eating had a deeper significance than it has to us. Their world was not so neatly bisected into material and spiritual as is ours. Theirs was a unit, and their lives were not considered as tripartate—body, soul and spirit—but as unitary. In eating and drinking, as in living and dying, to them the whole man was involved. When they ate and drank something magical took place. If primitive man drank the blood of an animal, he believed that the life of the animal entered

by their appearances, for they are a rebellious
7 house).[10] But speak my
words to them, whether they listen or
refuse to listen, for they are a rebellious
8 house. But you, O mortal man,
hear what I am saying to you. Be not
rebellious like this rebellious house.[11]

Open your mouth and eat what I am
9 giving you. Then I looked and lo!
a hand was stretched out to me, in
10 which [12] was a book-roll. And he unrolled
it before me, and it was written
front and back, and there were written
on it, dirges, and mourning, and woes.

3:1 And he said to me, Mortal man, (Eat
what you find) [13] eat this roll, then
up, speak to the house of Israel. So
2 I opened my mouth and he made
3 me eat the roll (this).[14] Then
he said to me, Mortal man, cause
your belly to digest and fill your stomach
with this roll that I am giving you.
So I ate it[15] and in my mouth it was
as honey for sweetness.

4 Then he said to me, Mortal man, up,
go to the house of Israel and speak
5 my words to them. For you are not
sent to a people of strange speech, (and

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into him. If he ate the heart of a lion, he was convinced the strength and ferocity of the lion would be his. If a company partook of a meal in common, they became in very fact related. Hence in this symbol, when the prophet ate the book from the hand of Yahweh, he entered into personal relationship with God himself, a relationship which was actual and vital, and which had in it more than we think of when we speak of a mystical communion. The nearest we come to it in our Christian thinking is in the doctrine of transubstantiation, which the Oriental accepts much more readily than the Occidental. Ezekiel and his contemporaries would never have questioned its reality.

3: 4-9. DESTRUCTION COMES TO ISRAEL. In phraseology and content 3: 4-10 is similar to 2: 3-7. The refrain, " for they are a rebellious house," the estimate of Israel as hard of forehead and stubborn-hearted, the council of courage and perseverance to the prophet, are the same in both. The differences are also marked. In the former, 2: 3-7, Israel is vividly characterized as thorns, briers and scorpions; but they do not seem to be beyond hope. They may listen. In the latter, 3: 4-9, they are home people, but they are worse than the foreigner and will not heed the prophet. This conclusion has an air of finality. It is a sword thrust in the most sensitive place, racial pride. In loyalty and idealism they are inferior to the barbarian. This was the result of long experience with a people who had been obdurate.

There is no reason why we should not consider both paragraphs from the prophet. Like modern preachers, he may have used the same theme on two or more different occasions, and have somewhat varied them to suit local conditions. It is possible that 3: 4-9 is the later and expresses his final conclusion, that there is no hope for his people.

People of strange speech, or *deep lip* (5), an expression found in Isa. 33: 19—where the reference is to the Assyrian—suggests that the writer had close contact with foreigners. As the book was worked over during the exile and was not in its present shape till long after the captivity, it is possible we have here an echo of life among the Babylonians. However, the belief that foreigners would be as responsive to religious privileges as Israel, or more so, is prevalent throughout the O. T. Passages startling in their broad outlook are: Amos 9: 7; Isa. 19: 19-24; 56: 13-17; Jonah, Ruth, and Ezek. 5: 6; 16: 27, 48, 51; 23: 45. Such pronouncements must have rankled in the heart of Jews who were justly proud of their election (cf. Matt. 11: 21; 12: 41).

As in the earlier section, hard as Israel was in resisting the appeal of Yahweh, the prophet must be sterner in proclaiming justice. As diamond is harder than flint, so must be the man who proclaims righteousness and truth (8, 9, cf. 2: 6, 7). This is part of the majesty of the O. T. prophets. They did not cower and cringe before iniquity in high places.

of hard language, to the house of
6 Israel) [16] nor to many peoples (of
strange speech and of hard language),[17]
whose words you could
not understand. Though (not) [18] if
I sent you to them, they would listen
7 to you. But the house of Israel is not
willing to listen to you, for they are not
willing to listen to me. For all the
house of Israel is dull-witted and stubborn-hearted.
8 Behold, I am making
your face hard against their faces, and
your forehead hard against their foreheads.
9 As diamond is harder than flint,
I have made your forehead. Do not
fear them, nor be terrified because of
their appearance, for they are a rebellious
10 house. Then he said to me, Mortal man,
all my words, that I shall speak to you,
take to your heart and listen to, attentively.

11 Now, up, go to the exiles, the children
of your people, speak to them and say to
them, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, whether
12 they listen or refuse to listen. Then the
spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind
me the sound of a great rustling, as the
glory of Yahweh rose up [19] from his
13 place, even the sound of the wings of

Sometimes, alone like Daniel in the lions' den, they faced a hostile world, but would not deny their convictions; at others, they were hard and savage, as were some Puritans, but justice and righteousness are discriminating and do not take iniquity under their wing. Such is the prophet—as diamond is harder than flint.

The prophet is assured that Yahweh's message to mankind is not completed; he is bidden listen carefully for it, and ponder it when it comes (9). This is a happy introduction to the command to be a watchman over Israel (2: 16b-21). Here the relation between God and the prophet is not through the medium of a book (2: 8b–3: 3), but is in a voice in the heart. This has kinship with messages found in Jeremiah (cf. Jer. 20: 9; 23: 29, 36; 31: 33; cf. Isa. 30: 21). These indicate that God meets a man in his intelligence and conscience, apart from external media; and is basically different from a book religion—which ultimately developed from 2: 8b–3: 3.

3: 10-16a. THE COMMISSION TO PREACH TO THE EXILES, is in every respect akin to 1: 5b-21, 23-25; 3: 23b-28; 8: 1-3 and 10: 1-22. No doubt, all of these passages have a Babylonian interest, and in general outlook vary greatly from the early parts of the book. As the major part of the first section of Ezekiel, chapters 1-24, is occupied with the destiny of the inhabitants of Palestine before the captivity of 586, this belongs to other conditions and comes from a later period (cf. Introd. xv).

While this is true, we must not forget that the captives of 597 B. C. had constant contact with the home city, and each was mutually interested in the other. Jerusalem leaders like Jeremiah and Hananiah discussed the return of the exiles (Jer. 28: 1-17). Members of the captivity in Babylonia were in correspondence with people in Jerusalem, and were endeavoring to direct affairs *in absentia* (Jer. 29: 24). As in a later period, men like Nehemiah and Ezra, together with their following, were in constant touch with Palestinian life and thought and even journeyed to their native land, so must it have been in the earlier days of the exile. Caravans passed regularly between the two lands, and with the commerce went also letters—and when need be, the people themselves. Because of kinship and common interest, the intercourse between the two groups, the one in Jerusalem and the other in Babylonia, must have been unbroken. It was the beginning of the diaspora, and that network of communication that later was so vital to Judaism was now in process of formation.

The *spirit lifted me up,* is part of the vocabulary of this writer. It has been taken to indicate a strange mental experience during which, as in a trance, the prophet moved from one country to another. Pre-Christian tradition sometimes interpreted such phrases as referring to actual physical experiences (Bel and the Dragon, 33-36). While a phrase like this naturally lends itself to either of these

**the living creatures touching each other,
and the sound of the wheels beside
them, (even the sound of a great
14 rustling).[20] Then the spirit lifted me up
and took me away, and I went
(bitterly) [21] with my spirit at fever heat,
for the hand of Yahweh was heavy on
15 me. And I came to the captives at
Tel-Abib, those dwelling by [22] the canal
Chebar, (And where these were
dwelling) [23] and I stayed there seven days,
completely dazed,[24] in their midst.
16 Then at the end of seven days it
happened.**

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conclusions, it is probable this is a literary device used by the editor to link up with the earlier message (cf. Introd. xv, xvi).

My *spirit at fever heat, the hand of Yahweh was heavy on me,* and *I dwelt there seven days, completely dazed,* are phrases that show strong religious convictions on the part of this literary artist. There was an inner compulsion that raised the mind to fever heat and left him confounded. Even here we need not think of anything approaching a trance. There was in Jeremiah's heart, as it were, a burning fire shut up in his bones (Jer. 20: 9); and Ezra the scribe was confounded and dumb for some hours (Ezra 9: 3); but neither was the victim of catalepsy. One of the cautious exegetes of years ago wisely suggested that this "lifting up" and all the actions in chapters 2 and 3 took place *inwardly* (A. B. Davidson, Com. 2: 2). It is equally legitimate to think of all such phrases as the interpretations of a disciple.

Tel-Abib, or deluge-mound, an addition to what we have in 1: 3, has not been located. No doubt there were a number—how many we cannot even guess—of separate groups of captives in Babylonia (cf. Jer. 52: 28-30, and 2 Kings 17: 6; 18: 10). These, while independent units under Babylonia, probably maintained continuous contact with one another.

Chapter 3: 16b-21; 23b-27

3: 16b-21. The Prophet as a Watchman has no relation to the preceding, but is not out of tune with 3: 9. At one time the connection may have been immediate. The watchman was a familiar figure in Palestine in all periods (2 Sam. 13: 34; 2 Kings 9: 17-20; Isa. 21: 6). During the vintage he was in the watch-towers, ever on the alert for marauders. In times of war, his was one of the important duties in the army. It was a term that earlier had been applied to the prophet (cf. Jer. 6: 17; Isa. 21: 11; Hab. 2: 1), and it may be assumed that in early years this sobering conception of the prophetic ministry, at least in germ, came to the mind of Ezekiel. Its most complete expression, part of which is verbatim with this, is found in 33: 1-9. Most writers recognize that this paragraph, 3: 16b-21, is inferior to the other, and many consider this secondary. But it may well be that here, as in 2: 3-7 and 3: 4-9, we have the original author repeating with variations the same idea. Ezekiel's religious experience, pictured in such extraordinary language, was surely but the prelude for a great responsibility. Obligations always follow on the heels of vision.

Two themes of theological import are interwoven in this short paragraph: the responsibility of the prophet, and individualism—that is, the responsibility of each individual for his own acts.

As for the first, the responsibility of the prophet, was an ancient concept. From the period of earliest religious writing there were those who recognized that each was his brother's keeper. Later the great prophets could not refrain from warning the nation of approaching danger, and this, an essential principle of social welfare is stated more clearly here and in 33: 1-9 than anywhere else.

Individualism, as over against solidarity, is also clearly expressed. The wicked man dies because of his own wickedness, and the righteous man is saved because of his own righteousness. This is stated in an extreme form because of the historical

16b And the word of Yahweh came to
17 me as follows: Mortal man, I am making you a watchman over the house of Israel. Whenever you hear the word of my mouth, you must warn them from
18 me. Whenever I say to the wicked, Assuredly you shall die, and you do not warn him, nor speak (to warn)[25] to [26] the wicked to turn [27] him from his evil way, so that he may live (the wicked)[28] he shall die because of his iniquity, but his blood will I require from your hand.

19 But you, if you warn the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way,[29] he shall die because of his iniquity, you, how-
20 ever have saved yourself. Further, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness [30] and does unrighteousness, (when I place a stumblingblock before him),[31] he shall die. If you did not warn him, he shall die because of his sin, and his righteous deeds that he had done shall not be remembered, but his blood will I require from your hand.

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background. In tribal life, which was the dominating pattern in Palestine, the tribe as a whole was responsible for the acts of each. If one sinned all the family suffered (Josh. 7: 24-26). The old law was that the iniquity of the fathers was visited on the children to the third and fourth generation (Exod. 20: 5). Blood revenge, the law of the tribe, was one phase of this principle, under which every member of the tribe had the sacred responsibility of slaying any one who had slain any member of his tribe. Only slowly did the idea of individual responsibility emerge (cf. Gen. 18: 25-33; Jer. 31: 29). Ezekiel is the great proponent of this doctrine and has put it in more definite form in the following chapters (cf. 14: 16; 18: 1-19; 33: 10-20). Earlier prophets had preached the ruin of the nation. But surely there were some great and good souls who deserved better things, and should not suffer along with the rebels. Hence individualism was the answer to an ethical problem.

3: 22b, 23a. THE PROPHET IN THE VALLEY. What may be the first intimation of the call of Ezekiel to prophesy is found in 3: 22b, 23a, which has no possible connection with what precedes or what follows.

Yahweh commanded him to go out into the valley so that he might speak with him. As with other prophets, we expect a definite commission (cf. Amos 7: 14, 15; Isa. 6: 9-13; Jer. 1: 4-10). But if the present order be followed, he is sent into the valley, where he is shown the glory of Yahweh, and is then ordered to go and shut himself up in his house (24). For such a purpose this journey would be ridiculous. The fact is, there is no connection between the sections.

The order suggested in the Introduction places this at the beginning of his ministry. It was his call. The vision of the radiance of Yahweh, 1: 4, 5a, 22a, 26-28a, came to him in the valley. The type of audience, 2: 3-7 and 3: 4-10, the eating of the roll, 2: 8b–3: 3, and his duty as watchman, 3: 16b-21, are conceptions that followed more or less quickly. Without some such reconstruction we have only unrelated fragments; following this sequence, we have a significant story of religious development that parallels the awakening of other prophets.

The hand was an ancient symbol of power. Indeed, it or its symbol was often thought to have magical qualities, and one of the most common amulets in Palestine today is the porcelain hand.

The *valley*, is nowhere definitely located, but would seem to be the same as that referred to in 8: 4 and 37: 1. The term valley, or cleft, essentially a place that is split, does not fit into the Babylonian topography. The Babylonian plain was wide and level, with the mountains far removed, while in Palestine valleys as such, are everywhere. This word almost limits us to some area in Palestine for much of the first section. This valley may have been some place in the vicinity of Jerusalem, long frequented by the prophet, and hence favorable for profound religious experiences. Here he may have conned over the

21 But you, if you warn [32] the righteous
man so that he sin not (righteous) [33]
and he does not sin, the righteous
man [34] shall live because he took
warning, and you have saved yourself.

22 And the hand of Yahweh came on me
there, and he said to me, Up, go into
the valley, and there I will speak
23a with [35] you. So I rose and went
to the valley.

23b And lo! there the glory of Yahweh
was standing, like the glory I had seen
by the canal Chebar, and I fell on my
24 face. But the spirit entered me and set
me on my feet and spoke with me [35]
and commanded me, Go, shut yourself
25 up in your house. And you, mortal
man, see, they are putting bonds on you,
and I am binding you with them, so
that you shall not go out among them.
26 And your tongue, I will cause to cleave
to your palate, so you shall be dumb,
and you shall not be a reprover to them,
27 for they are a rebellious house. But
when I speak with you, I will open your
mouth and you shall say to them, thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, let the one who
hears continue to harken, and the one
who neglects continue to neglect, for
they are a rebellious house.

4:1 *A.* Now, do you, mortal man, take for
yourself a clay tablet, and set it before
you, and engrave on it a city, (even
2 Jerusalem).[1] Then lay siege against
it, and build a siege tower before it,
throw up earthen walls against it, also
pitch camps against it and place [2]

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teaching of prophets, or pondered on the cruel fate of his people, and their sin, its apparent cause. Here, like the youth of every generation, he may have dreamed of his personal responsibilities to his nation and God. Such a place and such a man were conditioned for such a vision as we have in chapter 1 (1: 4, 5a, 22, 26-28a).

3: 23b-27. The Prophet Shut Up in His House. Again, we are in the same atmosphere as chapter 3: 10-16a. The later theologian is guiding us, and most of it is merely repetition of hackneyed phrases. The new element is that the prophet is commanded to shut himself up in his house and told that he will be dumb, until Yahweh opens his mouth. This has always been considered a *crux* passage, and has been linked with others to prove that under the severe strain due to the war and the captivity, his nervous system was shattered—an ancient case of shell-shock!

It is true that men who have suffered from catalepsy and other nervous disorders seem to have been used to achieve great things in ethics and religion; this no one questions. Prophets have been dumb because of persecution and insults. Jeremiah more than once ceased preaching and expressed himself in symbolism equal, at least, in vividness to this (Jer. 20: 7-10). Yet we never think of reading the Jeremiah passage literally; hence the question may be raised, Is it necessary so to interpret Ezekiel?

That at this time Ezekiel actually shut himself up in his house, and that he was dumb until the fall of the city (cf. 24: 27; 33: 22), is quite out of agreement with the whole tenor of the book (cf. Introd. xiv). In the following chapters (4-7), he continued to go out (4: 3; 5: 2) and to reprove. Any other interpretation of his dramatic acting of the siege and capture of the city seems puerile. That he was dumb during all this period is contested by every page; so some other interpretation is required.

However, we may well believe that the popular reaction against his message was such that it was wise for him often to refrain from speaking, and sometimes not to appear in public. No city could year after year patiently endure such a calamity-howler. Public resentment may have temporarily restrained his preaching; but if so, he effectively enacted his message of swift approaching doom. He may at times have stayed within doors, to avoid the rabble; but if so, it is probable that the pen of the scribe was at work for the task of the morrow.

3 round about it battering rams. Then
for yourself, take a flat plate of iron,
and place it as an iron wall between
you and the city. Then set your face
firmly against it,[3] for it shall be in a
state of siege. Thus shall you lay siege
against it. This is a sign to the house
of Israel.
4 *B.* Now, do you lie on your left side
and bear [4] the iniquity of the house
of Israel, according [5] to the number
of days you lie on it, you shall bear [6]
5 their iniquity, for I have appointed to
you the years of their iniquity, a number
of days, 390 [7] days. Thus you
shall bear the iniquity of the house of
6 Israel. When you have completed these,
then you shall lie on your right side (a
second time),[8] and bear the guilt of
the house of Judah, 40 days, a day for
a year, (a day for a year),[9] I have
appointed it to you.
7 *E.* And to the siege of Jerusalem you
shall set your face, and your arm bared,
thus shall you prophesy against her.
8 *B.* And see, I have put bands on you,

DIVISION I. SECTION (b). 4:1–7:27

Jerusalem and Judah Are to Be Destroyed

Chapter 4

4:1-17. The Siege of the City Is Portrayed in 4:1-3, 9a, 10, 11, 16, 17; and the duration of the exile is the theme of 4:4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15; while vs. 7 is a scribal link (cf. Introd. xxxiv). The siege material in the translation is marked A, and that pertaining to the exile B.

A. 4:1-3, 9a, 10, 11, 16, 17. The Siege Symbolism must have been a message to the people of Jerusalem. In any other setting it would have been poor stage-play. Some period when disaster faced the city, preferably that preceding the captivity of 586, furnishes the adequate historical background.

There is nothing in this symbolism that could not easily and effectively be presented by the prophet. Clay tablets were in every-day use throughout the country. Almost 3,000 years earlier, they had been developed in Babylonia for documentary purposes. 1,000 years before this they had been used in Egypt and Palestine, as is proved by the Tel-el-Amarna letters, and fragments found in many of the Palestinian mounds.

Such tablets were of various sizes, from less than a cubic inch up to bricks of considerable size, and even slabs of large surface. The needs of the literary material alone determined the size of the clay. A stylus or sharp stick was used to impress the characters or etch in the figures desired on the soft surface of the compact clay, and then the tablet, or brick, or slab, was dried in the sun, or baked in a furnace, as desired.

The size of this tablet is not indicated; probably it was a slab or large brick, on which he etched the outlines of a city, the various siege machines, towers and mounds. It would be crude, but illuminating. Such attacks on city fortifications have been graphically portrayed in the Assyrian monuments, notably Sennacherib's capture of Lachish in 701—which is as vivid and gruesome as if done on canvas.

Having sketched such a scene, Ezekiel was then to take an iron pan—a flat pan used for cooking—and place it between himself and the city. The meaning is clear. The city is or is to be besieged. It will be so surrounded that there will be no escape. The face of the prophet, who is the representative of Yahweh, is set directly against it; thus the destruction is the inescapable will of Yahweh. Such was the lesson intended by the symbolism.

Where all this was to be enacted we are not informed, but we may be sure it was not done in a corner. It was a sign to the house of Israel (3), and must have been public. While his own courtyard, if he had one in Jerusalem (3:24 is indefinite), would be semipublic, the city gate or the market-place outside the city wall would present the better opportunity for a demonstration. Actions such as described would be peculiarly impressive

and you shall not turn from side to side, until you have completed the days of your bonds.[10]

9a *A.* Also take for yourself wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and spelt, and put them in a single vessel, and make your own bread from them.

9b *B.* According to the number of the days that you lie on your side (390).[11]

10 *A.* Your food (which)[11] you shall

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to the populace of Jerusalem. Many of them would believe that the symbolism, worked out by a man of God, would actually bring about the result outlined. Sympathetic magic, in which like produces like, is very wide-spread. Among primitive peoples, when the effigy of a man is burnt, or pins or nails are driven into a statue of him, the belief is that the person suffers in like manner. Hence the dwellers in Jerusalem looked on these acts of the prophet differently from what we do. Our judgment as to the fitness of things was not the measure of the effectiveness of such preaching. We are not much impressed by Isaiah going around half-clad (Isa. 20: 3), or by Jeremiah hiding his girdle (Jer. 15: 1-5) and wearing an ox-yoke on the city streets (Jer. 28: 2-13). But to many people these were never-to-be-forgotten lessons. These symbols may have carried more conviction to his audience than all his fiery denunciation.

The mounds of earth (2) were thrown up against or near the walls of a city under siege. They gave protection to the attackers and paved the way for scaling the walls. Movable siege-towers were erected over against the wall-towers, so that the attackers might be on a level with the defenders. From these they could hurl their missiles into the city, or shoving them against the wall, meet the guard in hand to hand encounter. Battering-rams, consisting of massive beams mounted on rollers, were moved backward and forward by man power. All the picture is in agreement with Assyrian records, which declare that they had to bring their heaviest siege-engines to reduce the fortifications of the cities of Palestine. The siege story continues in 9a.

B. 4: 4-6, 8, 9b, 12-15. THE EXILE AND ITS DURATION presents grave difficulties. The time, the place and the meaning of the symbolism must all be inferred from the story itself. As it deals with the duration of the exile, of Judah on the one hand, and Israel on the other, it is probable that it was written after the fall of the city in 586, though it is not impossible it was written shortly before this date. As early as 593 there were those who were speculating as to the time when those who had gone into exile in 597 would return (cf. Jer. 28: 2-12). On the part of some there was an expectancy that it would be immediate, but Jeremiah, not so optimistic, contended that it would be delayed some seventy years (Jer. 28: 12-16; 25: 11; 27: 7; 29: 10). While from 597 on the return was a live problem, it seems more likely that this pronouncement was after 586, rather than before.

An important fact bearing on the date of this section is that not all of this symbolism could be enacted. Parts of it are mutually exclusive. The captivities, respectively of the North and South, were in part synchronous. He could not lie bound, on both sides, the one representing Judah and the other Ephraim, at the same time. Nor does rigidity of body for some 390 days, correspond to what we know of the activity and mental attitudes of the writer of the major part of the book. Here we have less of symbolic act and more of literary art than in the kindred picture. It is possible that all the section is a literary contribution, produced after the fall of the city.

However, it seems evident that the date from which the captivity was reckoned must have been 586 B. C. Up until then there was some lingering hope of escape, but that witnessed complete disaster.

eat by weight, eight ounces per day;
11 you shall eat it at regular times. Water
you shall drink, a pint and a half; you
shall drink it at regular times.

12 *B.* You shall eat it as barley cakes,
and you shall bake it on human dung before
13 their eyes. And you shall say,[12]
Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, even thus

However, the duration of the captivity, the significance of the forty years is not free from difficulty. Is this forty years simply a round number, or is it intended to be definite? It is well known that the Oriental abhors statistics. Forty is the standard symbol for the active period of human life (cf. Numb. 14: 34; 1 Kings 19: 8; Judg. 3: 30; 5: 31; 8: 28; 13: 1). If this is our understanding, then the prophet is thinking about the return in general terms, stating that it is sure to happen but not for a generation. That would be some forty years after 586, which would bring us down to 546, or a few years earlier or later. This would not be out of harmony with Jeremiah, who, speaking concerning the return of the 597 captivity said it would not occur in that generation, or not until seventy years. (Note especially that in Jer. 27: 7, the seventy years is equated with the rule of "him and his son and his son's son"; which is a reference to the rulers of Babylon.)

The problem is further complicated by the duration of the captivity of the North. In the Hebrew it is given as 390 years, while in the Septuagint it is 190. The writer expected the North and the South to return at the same time (cf. 16: 53; 37: 11, 16-23). Hence we may work back from 586 for the beginning of the disaster of the North. That is, their "exile" preceded that of the South by 350 (390-40) years—according to the Hebrew. Three hundred and fifty from 586 will throw us back to 936, which is within a few years of the schism of the North under Rehoboam. This was looked on by many as the great disaster (Hosea 8: 4), and many hoped for an ultimate reunion. Thus, using the Hebrew text, a general agreement would be effected.

But if we take the Septuagint 190, we go back in history 150 years, and find ourselves at 736. While the fall of Samaria took place in 722, the district of Gilead, east of the Jordan, was taken by the Assyrians from Menahem in 734—and in a real sense this was the beginning of the end. This is sufficiently close to enable us to defend the Septuagint text if we choose so to do. But in no way do we arrive at a definitive date.

The following conclusions, however, seem to be warranted. First, the prophet was confident that in the good providence of Yahweh both Judah and Israel would be restored to the homeland, and would there be united in one kingdom. Secondly, he did not expect the course of empire would change over night. He measured the ups and downs of national existence, not by years as did Hananiah, but by generations, as did Jeremiah. Babylonia's power and the captivity of both North and South would continue for another 40 years—for a generation. Like Jeremiah, he probably would have counseled the exiles to build houses, plant gardens, and pray for the peace of the city in which they lived (Jer. 29: 4-10). The day of Yahweh did not seem to be on the near horizon in 586. Thirdly, the prophet was using round numbers in both cases, and gave his hearers no exact information as to when the exile would end. He was not predicting, he was preaching, comforting, in this case. When we treat these numbers as an unprejudiced Oriental would understand them, we have little difficulty. We need neither an ancient scribe, harmonizing the texts with history, nor a modern eisegete, combining these with other numbers and then announcing the "end of the age." A further question is, Are they a part of the editorial framework of the book (cf. Introd. xiv, xv)?

But an even weightier matter is presented in the story. The prophet was

shall the children of Israel eat unclean
food among the nations whither I shall
14 drive them. But I said, O (Lord) Yah-
weh, behold I have never been defiled,
neither the carcass nor the torn thing
have I eaten from my youth until now,
nor has any abominable flesh come into
15 my mouth. Then he said to me, See, I
give you cow's dung in place of human
dung, so prepare your food on it.
16 *A*. Then he said to me, Mortal man,
I am about to cut off the food supply
in Jerusalem, and they shall eat food
by weight and in terror, and they shall
drink water by measure and in dismay.
17 Because bread and water shall be lack-
ing, each and every one shall be dis-
mayed and waste away because of his
iniquity.

5:1 And you, O mortal man, take a sharp
sword, use it for yourself as [1] a bar-
ber's razor, and pass it over your head
and your beard. Then take balances

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the representative of the people. He, in figure bound up in the bundle of their life, was bearing their iniquity. This was the expression of a great social fact. He, the innocent, the servant of God, was suffering with the guilty. Here is a realization of the puzzling fact that good people suffer with the bad—indeed, the good man bears their iniquity. This scarcely came in the early days of Ezekiel, but was a product of experience. These were days of great searching of heart, and it was during the exilic period that the meaning of suffering was clarified, at least in part. If this comes from Ezekiel the idea may have matured in the later years of the prophet's activity, and may belong to the same period as chapter 37 (So Hermann. 35). It is only a short step from this to that full expression of vicarious sacrifice, also a revelation of the exile, found in Isa. 52: 13–53: 12.

One of those details for which an interpreter may have been responsible is found in verse 7. The bare arm seems to explain how a man could lie on his side and at the same time quite easily use the stylus on the clay tablet. It was written after the two stories were united, as otherwise any statement would be superfluous.

A. 4: 9a, 10, 11, 16, 17. CONDITIONS IN THE BESIEGED CITY. Food was rationed, and reduced to a minimum as the siege continued. Often only the wealthiest could eat. Others starved; while the feeble died off first. During the World War of 1914-1917, the lepers of Jerusalem became practically extinct. In ancient times refuse was eaten (2 Kings 6: 24-30), and cannibalism was sometimes a last resort (2 Kings 6: 29; Lam. 2: 20). Terror and dismay might well strike to the heart of the stricken city.

B. 4: 12-15. EATING UNCLEAN FOOD was one of the dread experiences of captivity. In a foreign land everything was unclean to the Jew with priestly inclinations; the land itself was unclean, for it was the territory of Marduk; the produce of the land, also, for the first fruits and the first sheaf had not been presented to Yahweh; the animals and their milk and flesh likewise that had not been offered to Yahweh, with the proper ritual, were also taboo. Hence all the food would be unclean, and few disasters greater than that could be conceived. Exile, alone was a tragedy, but when one's religious traditions must be violated every day in order to keep body and soul together, how appalling the tragedy! Such were the terrors held before the people—in order to bring them to repentance. Such, the indescribable disasters from which they suffered.

Chapter 5

5: 1-17. A SYMBOL OF DESTRUCTION. The head shaved with a sword announced coming desolation. This symbol could have been enacted effectively only in Jerusalem. In Babylon it would have been cheap byplay without an audience; in Jerusalem it was a terrifying sermon without words. The prophet is commanded to take a sword, the instrument of war, and using it as a razor, cut off

for weighing, and divide them into parts.
2 A third part you shall burn in the
fire [2] in the midst of the city, as the
days of the siege draw to an end.
(Then take) [3] And the third part [3]
smite with the sword round about it.
Then scatter the third part to the wind.
(For I will pursue them with the
3 sword).[4] But take from there a very
few, and bind them up in the corner [5]
4 of your mantle. And again take some
of these and throw them into the fire
and burn them with fire. (From them
goes forth the fire).[6]
And say to all the house of Israel,
5 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, This is Jerusalem.
I have set her in the midst of
the nations, and countries lie round
6 about her. But she rebelled against
my judgments, to act more wickedly

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his hair and beard (5:1-4). This was tragedy and disgrace in the highest degree. The beard, to the Oriental, was the evidence of manhood, the badge of dignity, while the hair of the head added to personal beauty (2 Sam. 14:26; Song of Solomon 5:11) and was a sign of strength (Judg. 16:5). In pre-Canaanitish days the hair probably was left uncut, a practice perpetuated by the Nazarites, who made the customs of primitive life sacred and gave them religious significance (Numb. 6:4-6). The priests, always most conservative in religious affairs, likewise honored the practice of ancient days by never shaving the head (Lev. 21:5; 19:27; Ezek. 44:20). Baldness was at least a misfortune and the shaven head evidence of great grief (Amos 8:10; Isa. 15:2; Jer. 41:5; Acts 18:18); while cutting off the beard was a disgrace (Isa. 7:20; Jer. 48:3; 2 Sam. 10:4-6). The shaven head of the convict of today furnishes a partial parallel.

5:1-4. THE SYMBOLISM. The word for barber though common in Phœnician, Aramaic and Assyrian, is used only here in the Old Testament. Razor, or barber's knife, was known early in Egypt and probaby shaving was practised still earlier in Babylonia. But among shepherd peoples, these refinements of civilization were unknown.

Balances are very ancient, as they must have been used for the early days when barter was the commercial practice. On Egyptian monuments of the third millennium before the Christian era, we find pictured the balanced cross-beam, with a pan suspended to each end. No doubt Ezekiel used some similar apparatus. Three divisions of the hair, one burnt, one cut up, and the third scattered to the four corners of the earth, is an epitome of what usually happened to a rebellious city when sieged and captured. The prophet, bare-faced, head cropped, going through the city with his hair in the balances, burning it, slashing it and scattering it to the wind, was a gruesome sight. But this was only a symbol of the coming calamity.

Vs. 3 may be an afterthought. It has to do with preservation, not with destruction (cf. 16:8; 12:16). It is however true to historic fact. There are always a few noble souls who are not swept away by disaster and cannot be overwhelmed by any national catastrophe. The author may have known a small group who in the midst of the general wreckage possessed their souls in peace and preserved their integrity and identity amid the nations. The verse is also significant in that it preserves an ancient, wide-spread belief that if some part of a person could be secured from danger, the person himself could not be injured. Our best illustration of this is Abigail's prayer for David, " May the soul of my Lord be bound up in the bundle of life with Yahweh, thy God" (2 Sam. 25:29). A similar idea is found in having the name written in the book of remembrance before Yahweh (Mal. 3:16; Isa. 4:3; Dan. 12:1). Name and hair were to these people integral parts of the person, and to keep these safe helped to keep the person safe.

There are two unconnected, but important phrases in verse 4, both of which seem late additions. The first, " take some of these . . . and burn them," is the pessimistic attitude so prevalent in proph-

than the nations, and against my statutes
more than the countries round about
her. For she has despised my judgments
and in [7] my statutes she has not
7 walked. Therefore thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, Because you have rebelled[8]
more than the nations that are round
about you, and have not walked in [9]
my statutes, nor kept my judgments, but
according to the customs of the nations
that are round about you (not)[10]
8 have done. Therefore thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, Behold I am against you
(even I)[11] and I will execute judgment
in your midst, before the eyes of
9 the nations. Indeed, I will do against
you that which I have never done, and
the like of which I shall never do
again because of all your abominations.
10 Therefore the fathers shall eat the children
in your midst, and the children
shall eat their parents. Indeed I
will bring judgments on you, and I
will scatter all your remnant to every
wind.
11 Therefore by my life, Oracle of (Lord)
Yahweh, Assuredly because [12] you
have polluted my sanctuary, (with all
your idols and)[13] with all your
abominations, I myself will loathe [14]

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ecy. It is the urge towards being better, every day in every way. Idealistically, it is healthy; practically, it is usually very inconvenient. In every community, even the most select, there is an evil or a backward element. This verse insists on cleaning up the situation, rooting out the tares and burning them up. It expresses the thoroughgoing demands of Puritanism and the righteousness of the prophet.

The second phrase, "from them goes forth the fire," seems to be a commonplace, scribal addition to the foregoing, the word fire being the only connection. Its meaning probably is, that these sinners get what they deserve. As fire comes from them, so they go to the fire. It is equivalent to saying, they go to their own place. The Septuagint gives us a different reading, apparently an interpretation, and makes Yahweh responsible for this punishment by reading, "from me goes forth the fire"—which also is sound doctrine.

5: 5-10. The Reasons for the Coming Judgment are given in vss. 5-10, and the nature of the calamity is elaborated in 11-17.

That Jerusalem was set in the midst of the nations, was an estimate that grew out of national history. For four centuries the city had been the center of national and religious life. David and Solomon had ruled there, and the court and the priesthood had lived there. The shock of siege had been withstood on many occasions. While other cities had been humbled by the foe, she had dwelt apart, securely. Prophets had been born there, and lawgivers had made her temple a central shrine. This was Yahweh's dwelling-place, from which radiated his glory and his power. No wonder they considered it the center of the world.

Indeed, all peoples with history and race consciousness hold a similar conception. They are *the people*, and their city is the center of the world, the *omphalos*, or navel. Delphi, the great religious center of the Greeks, for which this claim was made, is only an illustration of what is well-nigh universal. It is the result of the human tendency to make the personal and the provincial the center of the universe. This self-appreciation when kept within limits is laudable, but when it loses sight of the achievements and worth of other races and places, it leads to downfall. It is noteworthy that Old Testament prophets gave this egotism a praiseworthy turn. To them privilege entailed responsibility, and that particularly in the ethical and the religious fields. Thus racial pride was the rather crude germ out of which blossomed ethical judgments and missionary ideals.

Judgments and statutes (6, 7) are characteristic words in Deuteronomy, the book of the covenant in 621 B. C. Rebellion (6) is the oft reiterated charge of the prophet against Israel, and that she was worse than her neighbors is repeated (cf. 3: 6, 7). Here, as frequently, the violation of ritual requirements, and the indulgence in

you, and neither will my eye have pity,
12 nor will I myself spare you. One third
of you shall die from the plague and
shall be consumed in your midst by
famine, and a third part shall fall round
about you by the sword, and a third
part will I scatter to every wind, and I
shall draw out the sword after them.
13 When my anger against them is glutted
(and I have rested my fury, and I have
comforted myself),[15] then you [16]
shall know that I Yahweh have spoken
in my jealousy, when I have glutted my
14 fury against them. And I will make
you a desolation, (and a reproach
among the nations that are round about
you),[17] in the eyes of every passer-by.
15 And you shall be [18] an object of
scorn and derision, a warning and an
astonishment, among the nations around
you, when I bring judgments on you
(in anger and in fury),[19] in the chastisement of my anger,[20] (I Yahweh
16 have spoken) [21] when I hurl against
you my evil arrows [22] in order to destroy you (which they are destroying
which I will send),[23] I am sending
famine on you, and I am breaking your
17 staff of life. For I am sending against
you famine, and wild beasts [17] and I
will leave you childless,[24] and plague
and blood shall pass through you, and
I will send the sword against you. I
Yahweh have spoken.

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the worship of foreign deities, comes under censure (6, 7, cf. 11).

A prediction of the most appalling type is added to the monotonous repetition of coming judgment (9, 10). Yahweh will have no mercy, and the most revolting of all inhumanities, cannibalism, will be practised. This was the depth of despair reached in 586 B. C. (Lam. 2: 20; 4: 40; 2 Kings 6: 24-29; Jer. 19: 9), and again, if tradition is to be credited, in 70 A. D. (Jos. Bel. Jud. vi. 4, 10, 205). Such was the measure of judgment for their horrible abominations. Yahweh was unrelenting, and no punishment was too severe for this adoption of the customs of other nations (cf. 6: 11, 12; 7: 4; 8: 11; Jer. 13: 14).

5: 11-17. SYMBOL OF THE SHAVED HEAD interpreted. Disaster is threatened over and over again. You have polluted *my sanctuary,* is the great sin here. This word, sanctuary, is rarely used by pre-exilic writers, and by them never for the temple. In this book it is found some 30 times, probably always in this sense (Exp. Times 1929, 218). Literally, it means a place set apart, and the appropriation of the word shows a very definite tendency in parts of Ezekiel.

In this section only a few features rise above stereotyped vituperation. Vs. 13, worked over by a scribe, looks forward to a time when Yahweh's fury will be glutted, and he will be comforted. But even the most hopeless situation is not without hope. The disaster itself, at least in part, was considered corrective (15), and if the Hebrew text is correct this is to be a warning to the nations. The original text may have been brought up to date by later scribes, yet it should not surprise us if at this period a prophet such as Ezekiel, who was on the way to be a theologian, should have grasped the principle that punishment should be disciplinary. It is true, the idea is not developed in this book, but many a man glimpses a principle, the complete significance of which he fails to comprehend.

It is strange that alongside of that is the idea that the more gruesome the disaster, the more completely does it prove that it comes from Yahweh. It is only when we keep clearly before our minds that the calamity was believed to be the consequence of sin, and as such expresses the justice of God, that we do the prophet justice. He was not dealing primarily with the nature and character of God; his theme was sin and its punishment; and in this he is clear-cut, and emphatic.

I, Yahweh have spoken (17), is a characteristic phrase, used more than fifty times in the book, and never found outside of it. It has the fine air of authority—and the promise of a dogmatic theologian. Unfortunately, such phrases are easily repeated, and are sometimes found in indirect ratio to the value of the message.

6:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, set your face
against [1] the mountains of Israel, and
3 prophesy against them,[2] and say, O
mountains of Israel, hear the word of
(Lord) Yahweh, thus says (Lord) Yahweh
to the mountains and to the hills,
to the ravines and to the valleys, Behold,
I (I) [3] am bringing a sword
against you, and your high places shall
4 be destroyed,[4] your altars shall be
desolate, your sun-obelisks shattered, and
your slain men I will throw in front of
5 your filthy images, (And I will place
the carcasses of the children of Israel
before their filthy images),[5] and I
will scatter your bones round about
6 your altars. In all your habitations, the
villages shall be laid waste, and the
high places shall be desolate,[6] so that
your altars shall be laid waste, (and
shall be made guilty) [7] and your filthy

Chapter 6

6:1-14. DESTRUCTION IS COMING ON THE MOUNTAINS AND HILLSIDES. There are four sections in this chapter, three of which are quite independent. 6:1-7, continued by 13, 14, an apostrophe to the mountains, predicts that the destruction will compass the whole countryside. When repetitions such as 5a, which is the same as 4b, and 6b which is akin to 4a, and a few minor glosses are omitted, there remain a swift summary of the prevailing idolatry and a stinging announcement of drastic punishment. On the face of it, it was spoken to the people of Jerusalem and Judah some time before the captivity of 586. Vss. 8-10 have the captivity in the background, an experience that ought to bring heartfelt shame. Vss. 11, 12, a gleeful expression over the fury of Yahweh against the house of Israel, must have been directed to Jerusalem under provoking circumstances preceding 586.

6:1-7, 13, 14. AN APOSTROPHE TO THE MOUNTAINS. Such a literary device is common to the prophets (Amos 3:9; Micah 6:2); but there was more than poetry in such an appeal. The ancients believed land and people to be related. If the land suffered, so did the inhabitants. It was the sin of the people that brought punishment, and this usually took the form of famine, plague and war.

But beyond this, Palestine and the Hebrew nation were bound together by a vital compact. It was the home of their ancestry. There were their fathers buried, hence it was sacred. It was the land of promise, given to them as an inheritance by Yahweh. Here they had tilled the soil and gathered the harvests, and presented the first-fruits to Yahweh. At the ancient high-places they had celebrated their festivals, and all their religious traditions were bound up in the hills and mountains, the valleys and streams. Every part of the country held memories sacred to the inhabitants. The mountains and the people were inseparable; together they rejoiced and together they suffered; a curse on the country was a crushing blow to the populace.

Sun obelisks, or pillars, are first reported in Palestine in the 7th century, at the time of the Assyrian dominancy (2 Chron. 34:4), and may have been introduced in the time of Ahaz, 735–715 (cf. 2 Kings 16:7-18), or during the reign of Manasseh, 686–641 (cf. 2 Kings 21:1-9); though, there remains the possibility that they represent an old Phœnician form of worship, referred to in a late Carthaginian inscription. The type and ritual connected with these pillars are as yet unknown.

The word for *filthy images*, is a favorite one with Ezekiel. In his book it is found thirty-nine times, outside of it only some ten times. The exact meaning is uncertain. Literally it would seem to mean, things that are rounded, and is probably related to the word for dung. No doubt by it the prophet expressed all the loathing and contempt he felt for these symbols of false religion. The curse is the same as in preceding oracles, and disaster is again to be the evidence that Yahweh is God.

images shall be shattered, (and shall
cease)[8] and your sun-obelisks shall be
hewn down, (and the things you have
7 made shall be wiped out)[9] and the
slain shall fall in your midst, then you
shall know that I am Yahweh.

8 (And I will leave over).[10] When
some of you, those who escape the
sword, are among the nations, when
you are scattered among the countries,
9 then, those of you who have escaped,
will remember me among the nations
where they dwell, because I have
crushed[11] their adulterous heart, that
turned away from me, and their eyes
that committed adultery after their
filthy images, and they themselves shall
feel a nausea (because of the evil they
have done),[12] because of all their
10 abominations, then shall they know that
I Yahweh have spoken. (not without
cause, to do this evil to them).[13]

11 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Clap your
hand and stamp your foot, and cry, Ha,
ha,[14] (because of all the evil abominations)[15]
against[16] the house
of Israel, for by sword and by famine
12 and by plague, shall they fall. He
who is far off shall die by the plague.
He who is near by shall fall by the
sword, (and the remnant)[17] and the
one besieged shall die by famine. So
will I glut my fury against them.
13 Then shall they know[18] that I am

6: 8-10. Those Scattered Among the Nations will be ashamed. These verses are set apart by the pronominal suffixes, which are third person, while in 1-7, and 11-14, they are the second, and by the theme. The captivity and the dispersion are accomplished facts, and this may have been addressed to one of the many Jewish colonies, scattered among the nations. It expresses the hope that when they remember the abominations that were the cause of their suffering, they will have a heartfelt shame because of their iniquities. It is akin to 5: 15; 16: 52, 54 (cf. Introd. xxiv).

Idol worship is considered adultery. Hosea had characterized the relation of Yahweh to Israel as that of husband and wife (Hosea 2: 16, 19, 20), hence unfaithfulness in religion is often spoken of as adultery (Hosea 4: 2, 11-14; Ezek. chaps. 16, 23). The appropriateness of this is intensified by the sinister background of Baal worship, which was essentially a fertility cult, and licentious practices were all too frequent in its agricultural festivals. This fact colors much of the prophetic literature, and gives point to the scathing attacks on such religion.

The hope that the calamity of the exile might bring some to see their past so clearly that they would be ashamed and would sincerely repent was not vain. Many of the later phases of Judaism are the fruitage of this disturbing and awakening disaster. True religion found the will of God in tragedy and shifted its basis from the things of time and sense to those of the inner, the spiritual life. Crushing the heart, gives an inner touch to religious ideas and is in line with a central message of this book (cf. 11: 19; 18: 31; 36: 26). Also eyes that have committed adultery is preparatory to teaching such as we find in the New Testament, Whoso looketh on a woman. . .

6: 11, 12. Glee Over Sin's Punishment. Structure and content proclaim these verses to be a separate oracle. The prophet here stands aloof from the people, as the mouthpiece of Yahweh. There is no compassion for the distraught inhabitants, who are spoken of in the third person. There is almost a malicious joy over the impending disaster. In spirit it is of the same type as Ps. 2: 4, He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh.

More than once Ezekiel presents Yahweh as so incensed at the unspeakable abominations and the flagrant perfidy of his people, that he is without pity or compassion (cf. 5: 11; 7: 4; 8: 11); so this is not out of keeping with the spirit of the man. He has something of the aloofness of a theologian from the human situation, and Yahweh and the vindication of his ways are his chief themes. He is a far-off forerunner of that Puritanism

Yahweh, when their slain lie in the midst of their filthy images, round about them, on every high hill, (on all the mountaintops) [19] and under every green tree, (and under every thick leaved terebinth, a place) [20] where they have offered a sweet savor to all 14 their filthy images. Indeed, I will stretch out my hand against them and make the land waste and desolate, more than the desert toward Riblah,[21] in all their dwelling-places, then shall they know that I am Yahweh.

that could say, One ought to be willing to be damned for the glory of God.

6: 13, 14, continues 6: 1-7. On every high hill and under every green tree (13), is a time-honored Deuteronomic phrase (cf. Deut. 12: 2; 1 Kings 14: 23). In such places were found the early Canaanitish altars, dedicated to the worship of Baal and Astarte. When the Hebrews settled the country, not unnaturally they appropriated many of the old sanctuaries and there practised the rites of the local deities.

Stretching out the hand against, is a symbol for cursing. The hand was the symbol of power, and it might indicate blessing or cursing (Deut. 2: 15; 4: 34; Exod. 14: 27; Ezek. 8: 1; 37: 1). In course of time it became a sign of magical power, and a figure of the hand often was used as an amulet (cf. Exod. 17: 11; 1 Kings 8: 22).

Riblah lies north of Jerusalem in the Coele-Syrian valley on the Orontes river, about fifty miles south of Hamath. A strategic place, it was headquarters for the army of Babylon that, in 588–587, came against Palestine and the South (2 Kings 25: 6, 20, 21; Jer. 52: 2-9). It was here that judgment was pronounced on Zedekiah. Diblah of the Hebrew text is unknown and is a scribal error for Riblah.

Chapter 7

7: 1-27. DOOM HAS DESCENDED. All the chapter gives evidence of originating in Jerusalem during the closing months or days of the siege in 587 B. C. While in some places the text is utterly hopeless, the major idea is indisputable. Nothing now can save the whole country from the most deplorable disaster. In vss. 1-9 the end is at hand; 10, 11 declare there is no hope in any ephemeral movement; 12, 13 insist that bargaining in real estate will yield no profit; 14, 18 show the whole country at low ebb; 19-21, wealth is asserted to be a snare that attracts the spoiler; while 22-27 indicate that the situation has reached its climax. Yahweh turns his face away while the temple is desecrated.

7: 1-9. THE END IS AT HAND. The text of this section is so corrupt in parts that it defies all correction. The Septuagint in some places is helpful, in others varies so greatly from the Hebrew that we are sure difficulties existed at a very early date. This is further emphasized by the vs. order, which in the Septuagint runs as follows: 1, 2, 6a, 7, 8, 9, 3, 4, 5a. It is evident that the theme and the phrases of vss. 3, 4 are repeated in 8, 9, and it may be questioned whether we have here two copies of an earlier original, or whether vss. 8, 9 are an enlargement of vss. 3, 4. The probability points in this latter direction. Also 5-7 look like an enlarged variant of vs. 2.

Amid the difficulties of the text, the meaning of the original has not been obscured. It was the statement, in rhythmic form, of one who was an observer, and who knew that the ruin of city and country was immediate—because of the iniquity of the people. In the refrain there is an eschatological note that is akin to Amos 8: 1-3, while in thought it is very similar to Zeph. 1: 14-18. One phase of it is later developed in Ezek. 38: 16-19, 21-23; and these passages lay the foundation for apocalypses such as Isa. 24: 1-23.

The symbolism comes from early Semitic mythology. That the world would suddenly come to an end, in a sudden con-

7:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: And you, mortal man, say,[1] Thus says (Lord) Yahweh to the land of Israel.

An end is come, the end
Upon the four corners of the earth.
3 Now is the end upon you, and I hurl my anger against you,
And judge you by your ways, and bring on you all your abominations.
4 I will have no [2] pity on you, nor show compassion,
As [3] are your ways, I requite you,
While your abominations are in your midst.
So shall you know [4] that I am Yahweh.

5 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,

Distress after [5] distress; behold, the end [6] comes.
6 It comes, the end comes. The harvest is upon you.
7 Behold, it comes. The vintage[8] is upon you,
O Inhabitant of the land, the time is come.
The day of tumult is near, (and not shouting of mountains) [9]
8 Now, immediately, I pour out my fury upon you,

vulsion of earth forces, earthquake and volcanic eruption combining in a fearful cataclysm to change the whole face of nature, was a popular concept. This cosmic idea necessarily leavened their social and national world-thought. In such a catastrophe the hope was that old things would pass away and a new age be ushered in. Such conclusions were based on available evidence as seen in nature and in history—and reveal a good deal of hard thinking.

The prophet, as a religious interpreter of history, in all this finds God putting into effect his moral law. The genius of these men was that with this mythological background they were able to proclaim a religious message. Ezekiel uses popular cosmic theory to rebuke Jerusalem for her sins, and insists that the coming disaster is consequent on and commensurate with the sins of the people.

The land of Israel (2), reminds us of the early idea that the land and the people were inseparable (cf. Com. 6:2). That the deity and the soil were inseparable is part of the same idea. Palestine was Yahweh's land. The produce of it was his; this should be acknowledged by definite offerings (cf. Lev. 2:14-16; 23:17, 20; Exod. 23:16, 19; 34:22, 26). The land was Yahweh's home, and in early days he was not supposed to function beyond it (2 Kings 5:15-19). The victories of the armies of Israel naturally extended the territory in which Yahweh ruled; but it was the defeats suffered by Israel that freed Yahweh from the old geographic limitations. Disaster produced a finer philosophy than did conquest.

The four corners of the earth, is an old expression for world-wide, that is found in Babylonia early in the third millennium preceding the Christian era. Your abominations (3, 4, 8, 9, 20), refers specifically to idols, and the gloss, detestable things (20), is accurate. But these idols are unable to save the people, for though both city and temple are full of them, and the people are loyal to their rites and are lavish in ornamentation and sacrifice, they cannot ward off destruction (4).

Harvest and vintage (6, 8) are excellent similies of the certainty of the end. Doom in the A.V. gives the needed meaning, but has no relation to the Hebrew of the text. I will have no pity (4, 9) is of the same tone as 5:11 and 8:11.

7:10, 11. THE END IS AT HAND. The Hebrew of vss. 10, 11 is a wreck. The Septuagint has two quite different versions (LXX, B and A), each of which differs from the Hebrew. The text of 11 is the more uncertain. Moffatt may have shown his wisdom by omitting the whole verse from his translation. Cornill, with the aid of the Septuagint, emends the Hebrew to read as follows, And the sceptre shall

And exhaust my anger on you, and judge you by your ways,
And bring on you all your abominations.
9 I shall have no pity on you, nor show compassion.
As are your ways, so shall I requite you,
While your abominations are in your midst.
So shall you know that I am Yahweh (smiting).[10]

10 Behold the day; behold it has come.
The vintage has passed, the shoot has blossomed.
11 Pride has budded. Violence has risen up,
So as to be a rod of wickedness.
Not from them, nor from their multitude,
Nor from their wealth, nor their prestige.
12 The time has come, the day draws near,
Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn,
For wrath is upon all her wealth.
13 For the seller shall not come back to that which is sold,
(though their life is still among the living) [11]
(for wrath [12] rests on all her wealth he shall not return) [13]
For the life of each is in his guilt, none can strengthen themselves.

14 They have blown the trumpet,[14] and made everything ready.
But no one goes out to battle.
(for my wrath rests upon all the wealth) [13]
15 The sword is without, plague and famine within.
Whoever is in the open field, dies by the sword,
Whoever is in the city, is devoured by famine and plague.
16 Those of them who escape, shall escape,

wither; What are they and their pomp? For vs. 11 LXX B reads, The support of the wicked shall be taken away without tumult or haste, while in LXX A there are additions that in no wise aid in clearing up the problem. Bewer has a plausible reconstruction. Vss. 10b, 11b are scribal interpolations, and aided by the Septuagint and Hab. 2: 3, he emends 11b to read, It does not tarry nor delay. Then the reconstructed poem as found in 10a, 11b, 12a is:

Behold the day. Behold the end has come.
It does not tarry nor delay,
The time has come, the day draws near.
(J. B. L., 1926, 228).

The text is tantalizing. It has a suggestion of poetic vigor that must have been weakened by overzealous scribes. It hints at the uprising of an individual or group, making arrogant claims. Pride has budded, violence has risen up, so as to be a rod of wickedness (11). But the prophet is convinced that there is no hope in this movement. The vintage has passed, is his declaration, and the string of negatives with which he closes, made his attitude sufficiently clear to those who knew the background. But what the movement may have been we can only conjecture. Most likely an alliance with Egypt, during the Babylonian siege of the city, and the hope of the pro-Egyptian group in Jerusalem that Pharaoh Hophra would deliver them (cf. Jer. 37: 5-10). Ezekiel's attitude toward this Egyptian episode, as expressed in 19: 10-14, is in agreement with such an interpretation.

7: 12, 13. BUSINESS IS FOLLY. Another turn is given to the catastrophe in vss. 12, 13. The end was so near and so certain that any kind of business was futile. Rejoicing buyer and mourning seller suggest a time when property was on the market at greatly reduced prices, during and following both sieges of the city, 597 and 586. Many were glad to leave the city, and to do so had to sacrifice their property. Those who were slated for captivity, or were already in exile, endeavored to retain as much of their earthly store as possible. Among the poorer, who could not and needed not leave the city, and among the more adventurous, who remained to the end, there were many bargain hunters. War has always been a harvest-time for fortune seekers—the time to buy stocks is

But they shall be on the mountains,
Like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning,
17 Each one in his guilt. All hands shall be limp.
18 All knees drenched with water. They shall girdle with sackcloth.
And horror shall cover them.
Shame shall be on [15] all faces, on every head [16] baldness.

19 Their silver shall they fling into the
streets, and their gold shall be as unclean.
(Neither their gold nor their
silver shall be able to save them in the
day of the fury of Yahweh).[17] Their
appetite, they cannot appease, nor fill
up their stomachs, for their iniquity is
20 a stumbling block. The beauty of its
ornaments, they have set up in [18]
pride. Their abominable images, (their
detestable things) [19] they made from
it. Therefore have I made it as an unclean
21 thing to them. Indeed, I give it
a spoil into the hand of strangers, even
to the wicked of the earth, and they
shall desecrate it.

22 Then, shall I turn my face away from
them, and they shall desecrate my cherished
place. Even robbers shall enter
23 and shall pollute it. Make the end complete,[20]
for the land is full of bloody
customs, and the city is full of violence.
24 Therefore, I bring the worst of the nations,
and they shall possess their dwellings.
And I shall make to cease the
strength that was their pride, and their
holy places shall be desecrated.

25 Shuddering comes,[21] they seek
26 peace, but there is none. Disaster
comes upon disaster, rumor follows
rumor.

They shall seek an oracle from the
prophet. But decision has perished
from the priest, and counsel from the
27 elders. (The king shall mourn and) [22]
The prince shall clothe himself with
dismay, and the country people shall
tremble, because according to their
ways [23] will I do to them and according
to their practices will I judge them.
So shall they know that I am Yahweh.

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when they are at the bottom! That such were the conditions in Jerusalem during the siege of 587–586, is evidenced by the fact that an uncle of Jeremiah was eager to dispose of private property in the village of Anathoth, and Jeremiah availed himself of the privilege of purchase (Jer. 32: 6-15).

7: 14-18. THE COUNTRY IS A WASTE. One of the most vivid pictures of desolation in the whole book is in 7: 14-18. Devastation and terror are on every side. No man responds to the call of battle. Sword, plague, and famine ravish country and city alike. Stragglers, who gain the hillside caves, cower there in terror, wailing like the dove, disturbed from its nest.

7: 19-27. DESTRUCTION REACHES THE HEART OF THE NATION. Their wealth, with which they decorated the temple and out of which they made idols and images, instead of delivering them (19) had doomed them. Strangers attracted by it had attacked the city (21, 22). Yahweh was angered by their profane use of it (20-22), and it could not fill their stomachs nor clothe them (19), but would be spoil for the enemy. Their silver and gold were a snare and delusion, an unclean thing—which was the worst word the prophet could command.

The strangers (21), the wicked of the earth (21), and the worst of nations (24), were the Babylonians. While not named, they were well known, and the dread of them colors the whole picture, as in other chapters.

My cherished place is the temple, which had been polluted by pagan practices, and must suffer along with land, city and people. Yahweh cannot look on the coming desecration, and must turn his face away (22). Then robbers will enter and profane it.

The oracle shall cease from the prophet (26) is part of the same calamity. When Yahweh's face is turned away, not only may the temple be destroyed, but all the sources of revelation will be impaired. Decision by the priest and counsel from the elders fail when Yahweh's favor is withdrawn. This is the climax of the calamity.

Prince, not king, is the word Ezekiel

**8:1 It happened in the sixth year, in the
sixth month, on the fifth day of the
month, while I was sitting in my house,
and the elders of Judah were sitting before
me, that the hand of (Lord) Yahweh
2 fell upon me, and I looked, and
lo! the likeness (as the appearance)[1]
of a man,[2] (the appearance of)[3]
his loins and downward, being like fire,
and his loins and upward was like the
appearance (glowing brightness like the
3 color of)[4] of amber. And he reached
out the form of a hand, and took me by
a lock of my hair, and the spirit lifted
me up between the earth and the heaven,
and brought me to Jerusalem in super-**

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uses for Zedekiah (cf. 7:27; 12:10, 12; 21:30). The prince at the top, and the country people at the bottom, shall alike be terrified, because of their iniquities; and again, because of the disaster they shall know that I am Yahweh.

DIVISION I. SECTION (c)

Chapters 8–11

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

8:1-18; 11:1-13a; 8:1-4, the superscription is editorial and continues 1:1-3, giving as the date August or September, 592 B. C. By adding 7 of 3:15, 16, to 390 of 4:5, 6, we get 397, which is one year, one month and a few days—according to the time and the calculator—which fills in the period between the two dates (cf. Introd. xiv). 8:5-18 describes four phases of idolatry, and 11:1-13a adds another. These are messages from Ezekiel to groups in the temple, between 588 and 586. Editorial work is seen in 8:1-4, 7, and 11:1a, 5a.

Chapters 9 and 10 are visions. 9:1, 2, 4-7, 11, a vision of 7 divine beings destroying the wicked in the city, beginning at the temple; while 10:1, 3-5, in part and 8-22, present a vision of the glory of Yahweh deserting the wicked city. These visions are literary, eschatological, and Babylonian in interest. They were composed some time after the fall of the city, in the interest of theory, and in style and message greatly differ from Ezekiel. 9:3, and 10:2, 6, 7 and a few phrases in 3-5 are from a scribe who brought the 2 chapters into harmony. 9:8-10 is independent, exhibiting hope for the remnant (cf. 11:13b-21).

11:1-25. For 1-13a, see above. 13b-21, like 9:8-10, is eager for the preservation of the remnant, and naturally is later than 586. Vss. 22, 23 belong to the vision in chapter 10, and should connect directly with it, while 24, 25, like 1a, and 5a, are editorial (cf. Introd. xxxvii).

Chapter 8

8:1-4. THE SUPERSCRIPTION gives the date, in the sixth year, in the sixth month (the Greek has fifth), on the fifth day of the month, that is, September (or August) 592. This equation with our chronology is reasonably accurate, and is appropriate within a few years for 8:5, 6, 8-18, and 11:1b-4, 5b-13a. All the rest of the material probably came later than 586.

The Elders of Judah (1) were those who because of age and wisdom were in authority. The Hebrew word is akin to that for beard, and "gray beard" would be a fair equivalent. The patriarchal system of government honored the aged; and good judgment and personal gifts separated certain men out from the rank and file. All old men were elders, but in the process of time outstanding personalities became Elders. In the exilic period and later, when those ruling classes—kings, princes, generals, governors and secretaries—that had been the product of the kingdom, were demoralized by the collapse of empire, the Elders occupied an increasingly important place. This importance is seen in Jer. 29:1; Ezra 10:8, 14, as well as in Ezek. 7:26; 8:1; 14:1; 20:1, 3. In all these passages the growing importance of the elders, and the reverse, the fading out of the kingship, is seen.

The hand of Yahweh, a frequent phrase, means the power of Yahweh. But the hand of Yahweh *fell upon me* differs

natural visions, to the inner door of the
gateway toward the north, where the
pedestal of the idol image, provoking
4 to jealousy was (the price)[5] (And
behold there was the glory of the God
of Israel, like the appearance that I saw
in the valley).[6]
5 Then he said to me, Mortal man, lift
up your eyes toward the north. So I
lifted up my eyes toward the north, and
lo! from the north at the gateway of the
altar, was the idol image provoking to
jealousy. (This was in the entrance.)[7]
6 Then he said to me, Mortal man, do you
see [8] what they are doing, the great
abominations that the house of Israel
are doing here, to remove me [9] far
from my sanctuary? But still greater
abominations you shall see.
7 Then he brought me to the door of
the court (and I looked and lo! a hole
8 in the wall, and he said to me, Mortal
man, dig, I beg you in the wall. So I
dug in the wall and lo! a door),[10]
9 and said to me, Go in and see the gross
10 abominations they are doing here. So
I entered and looked and lo! every
form of reptile and detestable beast,
and all the filthy images of the house of
Israel, were engraved on the wall,
11 round about (round about).[11] While
seventy men from the elders of the
house of Israel, with Jaazaniah, son of
Shaphan (standing)[12] in their midst,

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from the usual phrase, was upon me, or came on me. Fell upon me, lends itself to the interpretation that the prophet was a psychopathic case, and many other features in the book have been so interpreted. He saw visions, had strange experiences, and performed strange acts. From this it has been understood that he was quite abnormal. In fact this seems to be the easy interpretation of this and many other episodes, such as the hand of Yahweh fell on him, and in a trance he was transported to Jerusalem, and there in vision saw all that was going on.

With such an interpretation, here and elsewhere, there is one real difficulty. Amid innumerable claims of *second sight*, or far-sightedness, which is an exceedingly popular concept, there is no case where anything akin to this has been critically established. It is as foreign to experience as is the actual, physical transportation of a man across eight hundred miles of desert waste, instantaneously, by supernatural means. This latter occurrence, the physical transportation of the prophet, seized by a lock of hair and lifted up between earth and heaven, is supported by a literal interpretation of the text.

Yet such a crass understanding of the words seems unnecessary. Nor is it more essential to understand the supernatural visions as trances. These vss. are editorial; and like so many of the phrases of the scribe (he reached out the form of a hand, he took me by a lock of the hair, the spirit entered into me, the spirit lifted me up, etc.), this—the hand of Yahweh fell upon me—may be but a literary device to present vividly a theological conviction. Such phrases may be used as legitimately for presenting the conclusions of the theologian as for interpreting the personal experiences of the ecstatic. In either case they are but the effort to interpret personal conviction and experience (cf. Introd. xxii, xxiii).

8: 5-18. IDOLATRY IS PRACTISED IN THE TEMPLE. Three forms, each worse than the preceding, are shown in these verses. Knowledge of the actual situation is evident, and they seem to record the ritual practices of the time. The idolatry had been introduced from different sources. When the temple was built, Canaanitish influences were strong, Phœnicians were the architects, and Egyptian neighbors had long dominated the country. Later, political relations, especially those with Assyria, had added many foreign elements to the worship (cf. 2 Kings 16: 10-16). In the reign of Manasseh (686–641), the state religion must have been dominated by Assyria. There had been a reformation in the time of Hezekiah (715–686; 2 Kings 18: 3-6), and a more thoroughgoing one under Josiah, 621; but official reforms cannot eradicate popular and time-honored religious practices. Into the

were standing before them, each man having his censer in his hand, the perfume (of a cloud)[13] of incense rising
12 up. And he said to me, Mortal man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark (each one in the chambers of his imagery).[14] For they think, Yahweh does not see us. Yahweh has forsaken the land.

13 Again he said to me, Yet again, you shall see still greater abominations that
14 they are doing. He then brought me to the door of the gateway of the house of

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empty house, seven evil spirits are likely to return, and inside a generation after the official reform, the temple worship was as pagan as ever (2 Chron. 36:14).

8: 5, 6. THE IMAGE OF JEALOUSY. In the first scene the writer is standing within the temple area, looking toward the north gate, alongside of which, in the outer court, was an altar. Beside the altar, the origin and history of which we do not know, there was an image that caused jealousy. Here again we must express ignorance. The phrase is one of contempt, not of description. It is sometimes thought to be a sacred pole, the symbol of the prevalent Astarte cult. If so, we can understand the denunciation, for licentious rites played a part in the worship of the mother goddess. Such abominations tended to remove Yahweh from his sanctuary (7).

8: 7-12. ANIMAL WORSHIP. Greater abominations were to be shown. The writer was brought to the door of the inner court (7), which he entered (10). Vs. 8 assures the reader that the described worship was practised in secret, so that none but those initiated, or who had a special revelation, could have any information. But, clearly, the structural features of vs. 8 are not in harmony with vss. 7 and 9, and a wall, and the feat of digging through a hole in the wall is fanciful rather than practical.

The abominations, the reptiles, beasts and images graven on the wall, show Egyptian influence. Many types of animals—snake, scorpion, locust, mouse, cat, dog, jackal, crocodile, hawk, vulture—received homage in Egypt. The origin of much of this was totemistic, in which animals were worshiped, because of the belief that there is a relation between the spirit of the animal and the clan in question. The legislation in Leviticus made all such unclean (cf. Lev. 7: 21; 10: 10-13, 20, 41, 42). But the most disgraceful feature of it was that seventy of the elders were engaged in it, and Jaazaniah, a man of good ancestry, was their leader. Shaphan, the father of this miscreant, in all likelihood was the man who found the book of the law in the temple, in 621 B. C. (cf. 2 Kings 22: 3-11).

The use of incense in worship was common in Egypt from an early date. Incense altars that have been found in excavations in Taanach, Megiddo, Beisan and other places, from the Canaanitish period, prove its early use in Palestine. In early days Israel's leaders repudiated its use because it was foreign to their nomadic practices (cf. 1 Kings 12: 33; 13: 1; Hosea 2: 8). In later days, however, it was considered legitimate and was regulated (cf. Exod. 30: 27, 28; 31: 8; 35: 15; 37: 25). This worship, if *in the dark* is correct, was a part of some special ritual. A usual tendency in religion is to develop the side of mystery, in which initiations, rigorous disciplines, and knowledge are emphasized. This always gives the priesthood responsibilities and prestige. Cults of this type were popular in the East at this and later periods.

Chambers of imagery is a strange phrase, the meaning of which is not apparent. One is tempted to emend it slightly, so as to read "chambers of my dwelling." It is evident that from early times chambers in the temple area were used by worshipers and by priests for religious or for private purposes (cf. 1 Sam. 1: 12; 3: 1-9; Neh. 13: 4, 5). The author suggests that these men were aware that this was not part of the worship of Yah-

Yahweh, which is northward, and lo! there, women [15] were sitting, weeping for Tammuz.
15 Again he said to me, Mortal man, you see? You shall see still greater
16 abominations than these. Then he brought me to the inner court of the house of Yahweh, and lo! in the

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weh, but that he had forsaken the land, and hence did not care. At this time, when the fortunes of Israel were at lowest ebb, many people, in their distraught state of mind, must have been ready for any experiment in worship, if peradventure thereby they might be delivered. The evidence seemed to show that Yahweh had forsaken them, hence they must find refuge and strength in some other power. During these years there was much popular scepticism both as to Yahweh's interest in them and in his power to help them (cf. 11: 3, 5; 12: 21; 18: 2; 19: 33; 37: 11; Zeph. 1: 12).

8: 13, 14. TAMMUZ WORSHIP. The next scene presents a still greater abomination. The seer, who was at the door of the inner court of the temple (7), was brought to the door of the gateway of the house of Yahweh (14). That is, to the northern entrance to the temple, where possibly in the gateway itself, were women weeping for Tammuz. To the understanding, nothing more needed to be said. Reference to this type of worship is made only occasionally in the Old Testament (cf. Amos 8: 10; Jer. 22: 18; 44: 18; Zech. 12: 11; Dan. 11: 37; Isa. 17: 12), but its influence was wide-spread and unhealthy. It was very ancient, found in Babylonia among the early Sumerians in the third millennium preceding the Christian era, and emphasized fertility, in which the mother goddess and her consort were the chief figures. Because of the vital relation between fertility and the seasons, the ritual of Tammuz worship was elaborated around the changes of the seasons. In the spring came the festival of rejoicing, because of the creative forces that everywhere were expressing themselves in vegetable and animal life. In the summer, when these forces were waning, their theory was that Tammuz, the "son of life," the god of vegetation, had departed into the underworld, where he was held a prisoner. This, the month of Tammuz (July-August), was the time when the women wept for Tammuz. Their lamentations were an expression of their grief. At the time of the winter solstice, December 23, one of the most important parts of the ritual was observed. It was the turning-point in the seasons, and in all creative forces. The day was at its shortest, and the frost was at its height. But with December 25 came the change, when the day began to lengthen. This was the time of great festivity and rejoicing, celebrated by most ancient peoples. Alongside of this, the promise of springtime, went their theological theory. They conceived that Ishtar, or Astarte, the wife-mother of Tammuz, had in the autumn made a descent into the underworld in order to rescue her beloved. There she succeeded in her mission and together the two began their return journey to the upper world on December 25. This was, therefore, the beginning of the revival of all the fertility processes. The Tammuz ritual, of which we have a good many excerpts, was built around the idea of fertility. Worthy as was this central idea, and profound as was the underlying theological conception, we can easily see that practices abhorred by the Hebrews would naturally develop. This was the background which caused so many of the prophets to equate disloyalty to Yahweh with adultery and whoredom. But there was a valuable side to this conception, that should not be obscured because of the accompanying evils; that is, motherhood or the madonna and child was very close to the center of it. We remember that, here as always, there is no great good in the world that may not be grievously abused.

door[16] of the temple of Yahweh, between
the porch and the altar, about
twenty-five men, their backs to the
temple of Yahweh, and their faces eastward,
were prostrating themselves,[17]
17 (eastward)[18] before the sun. Then
he said to me, Mortal man, do you see,
how light a thing it is to the house of
Judah to practise the abominations they
do here? For they have filled all the
land with violence. (and they have
again provoked me).[19] Now behold,
they are sticking the fertility symbol
18 under my nose.[20] So, I myself, will
act in wrath; my eye will have no compassion,
nor will I pity. (Though they
cry distressingly in my ears).[21]

9:1 And he cried in my ears, with a loud
voice, as follows: The visitations of the
city have come, (and each man had his
weapon of destruction in his hand)[1]
2 and lo! six men were approaching from
the way of the upper gate[2] that faces
north,[3] each man with his war-club in
his hand, there being a man in their
midst, dressed in linen, with a writer's
inkhorn in his loin-girdle, and they entered
and stood beside the bronze altar.
3 (And the glory of the God of Israel,
went up from upon the cherubim,[4]
which were (upon it),[5] by the
threshold of the house).[6] And he
spoke to the man, who was dressed in
linen, with a writer's inkhorn in his
4 loin-girdle, and (Yahweh)[7] said to
him, Go through the midst of the city,
(through the midst of Jerusalem),[8]
and place[9] a mark on the forehead
of those men who sigh and cry over the
abominations that are done in her midst.
5 Then to the others, he said in my
hearing, Go through the city after him
and smite. Let your eyes have no[10]
6 compassion and show no pity. Old men
and[11] young men, and virgins and
little children and women, slay utterly.
But do not touch any one on whom is
the mark. Now begin at my sanctuary. So
they began with (the men)[12] the
elders, who were in front of the temple.
7 Again, he said to them, Defile the
temple and fill the courts with dead
bodies, then,[13] go out. So they went
out and smote in the city.
8 Now it happened, while they were
smiting and I was left alone,[14] that I
fell on my face and cried out and said,
O (Lord) Yahweh, will you destroy all
that is left of Israel, in the outpouring
9 of your wrath against Jerusalem? And
he said to me, The iniquity of the
house of Israel (and of Judah),[15] is
exceedingly great, and the land is full
of blood, and the city is full of injustice,[16]
for they think, Yahweh has

8:15-17. SUN WORSHIP. But there were still greater abominations to be seen. There is great divergence of opinion as to the exact type of worship here denounced. Some contend that a form of Persian sun worship is condemned. In certain rites, Persian priests held a bunch of twigs of the pomegranate, tamarisk or other tree, before the face when they prostrated themselves to the rising sun. It has been supposed that this bunch or branch was held before the face in order to prevent the sun's being contaminated by their breath. It has been argued that the word for branch is not accurate, and that this was too early for such marked Persian influence on Palestine. But neither of these arguments has so much weight today as formerly. Prophets were rarely philologians, and interracial influences were much more wide-spread than formerly supposed. Others, among whom were early Jewish interpreters, consider that the reference conceals some shocking, obscene rite, and that the word frequently translated "branch" should here, as in 23:20, be rendered by phallus, symbol of fertility.

Whatever the profane rites were, they were anti-Yahwistic. The leaders turned their backs on Yahweh, they worshiped the sun, and in the inner sanctuary dishonored Yahweh. The national collapse finds its climax, if not its sole cause, in the demoralization of its worship.

This chapter should be followed immediately by 11:1-13.

Chapter 9

9:1-11. DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY DIVINE AGENTS. Chapter 9 has only the slightest connection with what precedes. Editorial work may be responsible for 9:3a, and 8-10 which is independent, both

forsaken the land, so that Yahweh sees
10 nothing. But as for me, my eyes will have no compassion, and I will show no pity. Their deeds will I bring on their own head.

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of which divert the attention from the main thought. Phrase and thought of 9: 10 are the same as 8: 18, and it is natural to think of punishment such as is described in chapter 9 following sins such as are enumerated in chapter 8. Beyond this there is no relation.

The chapter continued in 10: 2, 7 is a dramatic picture, almost a poem, on the destruction of the city. In vividness it ranks with 1 Kings 22: 14-28, and Job, chapters 1, 2. Like these, the swiftness of the movement, the changing of the scene and the completeness of the picture hold the readers spellbound. Also, all is fantasy and not reality. The man does not go through the city and mark the pious; the seven men do not slay the sinners. In the actual catastrophe, righteous and unrighteous shared alike. Famine, sword and plague fell on both the just and the unjust. This is a piece of theological theory, not of experience. It shows how things ought to happen. With chapter 10, it separates 8 from 11: 1-13, and is akin to 1: 5b-21, 23-25; 3: 11-16a, 23b-27; and 8: 1-4. The indications are that it was written after the fall of the city, and it may have in it an apologetic interest in the remnant.

Cried with a loud voice, indicates neither strong emotion, nor the distance between earth and heaven, but expresses a military note that is part of the whole picture. Here it is the commander of the armies, or the chief of staff, who speaks. His officers hear and obey. Babylonian army organization may have contributed to this part of the picture, though such ideas are common to all people, and Yahweh had long been the commander of his people.

VISITATIONS (1)—the correct translation of the Hebrew text—were the consequences of the sin of the people, and were to be the work of the seven men. The Septuagint apparently read The overseer of the city drew near, but the Hebrew is probably the original.

Seven, stands for the complete number, the full quota of overseers. As a sacred number, its origin runs far back into primitive thought, and was probably derived from seven, the supposed number of the planets. In late and general usage it signified completeness (cf. seven eyes, Zech. 4: 10; seven stars, Rev. 1: 16; seven vials of wrath, Rev. 16: 1). While the idea owes its origin to Babylonian mythology, it is probable that at a very early date it was the common property of western Semites.

The seven men, one of whom was the scribe, have been considered angels, borrowed from the Babylonian hierarchy. No doubt in the older and more complex civilization of the Tigris-Euphrates valley they had a more elaborate mythology than had the Hebrews in Palestine. Their hierarchy was complex, and must have been fashioned on a military pattern. The gods had their scribe Nabu, who was the revealer of all things, and the man with the inkhorn in his girdle, may be a pale reflection of this divine functionary. But with our lack of material it is difficult to reconstruct the hierarchy of popular Israelitish thought. Angelology was not foreign to the thinking of the ancient Hebrews. Such glimpses as these found in Gen. 2: 7; 3: 24; 16: 7-11; Josh. 5: 13-15; 2 Sam. 26: 14; 1 Kings 22: 19; suggest that they may have had a well-organized, heavenly hierarchy. It seems, however, to have functioned in a vital way only in the later periods; which may have been due to Babylonian influence. But whatever may have been the background, the general meaning is clear. While the sin of the city must be punished, those who are righteous must be spared—is the primary teaching of the vision.

11 Then, lo! the man dressed in linen, who had the ink-horn in his loin-girdle, reported the affair as follows: I have done as you commanded me.

THE UPPER GATE, facing the north, is probably the same as that referred to in 8:3, 5. An upper gate is reported to have been built by Jotham (2 Kings 15:35). The history and the location of the bronze altar is uncertain. It is probable that such an altar was not installed in the temple in the time of Solomon. The text of 1 Kings 8:64, seems to be an apology for its limited capacity, and comes from a time long after the origin of the temple. The oldest Palestinian altars were native stone, or else mounds of earth (Exod. 20:24-26; Gen. 28:18-22). Bronze would be considered legitimate material for an altar only when the use of bronze and its accompanying civilization had been fully established. It was some two hundred years after the time of Solomon that Ahaz was accredited with placing a bronze altar on the north side of his newly erected Assyrian altar. This was probably in the great court of the temple. In the altar plan in the book of Ezekiel the material is not specified (Ezek. 43:13-17).

Fine linen was the authorized material for priestly garments (1 Sam. 2:18; 22:18; Exod. 28:42; 39:28; Ezek. 44:17-19), and for the princes (1 Chron. 15:21). At a very early date it was the customary clothing of the priests in Egypt, and to a lesser degree in Babylonia.

The inkhorn, the sign of the professional scribe, was attached to the girdle and hung by the thigh. The words for inkhorn, and the article as well, are probably of Egyptian origin, where ink had been in use as early as 1500 B. C.

Cherubim by the threshold of the house (3), were there as guardians. By the door of palace, or temple, or hovel, spirits as well as human beings were supposed to enter; hence the threshold must be carefully guarded. The blood of a sacrificial victim, sprinkled on the door-posts and lintels, was one well-recognized method of safety (Exod. 12:7-27). Prayers and magical formulæ were sometimes affixed to the posts and lintels, but the guardian deity at the entrance was one of the most effective of all methods (Ezek. 10:4, 18; 46:2).

Separating the righteous from the sinners is a departure from early practice, and is a sign of ethical progress. In early days the whole family suffered for the guilt of one member (cf. Josh. 7:24-26), on the principle of tribal solidarity. As civilization advanced, with the greater opportunity for individual achievement and the development of finer feelings, it was felt to be unjust that the good and the bad should suffer alike (cf. Ezek. 3:19; Deut. 24:16; 2 Kings 14:6). The most lucid expression to this truth is found in Ezekiel.

The mark on the forehead (4), was in the form of a Tau (T), the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Its earliest form was an X, or cross. Such marks had tribal and religious significance and were quite common (1 Sam. 21:14; Job 31:35; Exod. 12:23; Rev. 7:3; 9:4; 14:1). Early Christian interpreters — Origen, Cyprian, Jerome—understood this to be the sign of the cross, and hence a foreshadowing of the crucifixion.

Those who sighed and cried over the abominations were to be the favored ones. This is significant. They could not stem the tide of iniquity and thus deliver the city, but they did not quietly acquiesce in the great evils of their days. To have done so, would have been to play the accomplice. To object to the flagrant wrongs of society may seem futile, but, at least, it saves one's own soul!

All others, old and young, were to be ruthlessly slaughtered—beginning at the temple. Those with greatest privileges have greatest responsibilities, and the severest condemnations (Amos 1:2; Jer. 25:29). Naturally the elders came first. The climax of the disaster was the pollu-

10:1 Then I looked, and lo! above[1] the
dome that was over the head of the
cherubim, like a sapphire, (like the
appearance),[2] the form of a throne
appeared over them.
2 Then he said to the man dressed in
linen, (and he said),[3] Go in between
the whirling wheels, which [4] are under
the cherubim,[5] and fill your hand
with glowing coals of fire from between
the cherubim, and scatter them over the
city. And he went in before my eyes.
3 Now, the cherubim were standing on
the south side of the temple when the
man entered,[6] and the cloud-mass
4 filled the inner court. And the glory of
Yahweh went up from the cherubim
[5] to [7] the threshold of the
temple, and the temple was filled with
the cloud-mass, and the court was full of
5 the radiance of the glory of Yahweh. And
the sound of the wings of the cherubim
was heard in the outer court like the
voice of God Almighty, when he speaks.
6 And when he commanded the man
dressed in linen, "Take fire from between
the whirling wheels, from between
the cherubim," he went in and
7 stood beside a wheel and (the
cherub)[8] he reached out his hand
(from between the cherubim)[9] to the
fire which was between the cherubim,
(and he took and gave to the man
dressed in linen),[10] and took some
and went out.
8 And the cherubim seemed to have the
form of a man's hand under their wings.
9 When I looked, lo! four wheels were
beside the cherubim, one wheel beside
each cherub, and the appearance of the
wheels was like burnished Tarshish
10 stone. As for their appearance, the form
of each of the four was the same. It was
as if one wheel were within a wheel.
11 When they went, they went in any one
of four directions, without turning as
they went. For whatever way the head
faced, they followed after it, without
12 turning as they went. And their whole
body, and their backs, and their hands,
and their wings, and their wheels were
full of eyes round about (to their four

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tion of the temple by dead bodies. So filthy were the religious practices, that even the most sacred place could not escape. No wonder Yahweh left the city.

9:8-10. PRAYER FOR THE REMNANT. This petition is an intrusion; vs. 11, unconscious of it, goes back to vs. 7. Not a few commentators consider that its compassion is too remote from the frigid attitude of Ezekiel to have been composed by him. But to limit a man, even one predisposed to the speculative rather than to the emotional side of life, to one mood, is to forget that slumbering fire may sometimes blaze forth from beneath the coldest exterior. These verses, however, have been inserted in the older text, and it may well be that a later editor of the book, who wanted to take the edge off the viciousness of this judgment, inserted them from his own pen. Their chief interest lies in the preservation of the remnant, the idea of which suggests a date after 586. It is a word that occupied an important place in literature and theology of later days.

The lost faith in Yahweh (9, cf. 8:12) may have resulted from continued defeat in war and the ensuing unhappy state of affairs, or it may have been the result of general indifference. But whatever its cause, it loosened moral restraints and was a herald of national disintegration.

Chapter 10

10:1-22. THE GLORY OF GOD DESERTS THE CITY. The usual characteristics of the Babylonian material are found in 10:1, 3-5, 8-22. This is the cherubim-chariot of Yahweh (cf. chap. 1). 10:8-17 repeats with slight changes 1:5b-21; while 10:18, 19 is a parallel to 11:22, 23; and 10:21, 22 is similar to 1:6, 8, 9. Vss. 2, 7 carry on the vision reported in chapter 9, but the expected escape of the righteous and the burning of the city are nowhere chronicled. Vs. 1, which repeats 1:26—with the insertion of cherubim, thereby presupposing the information given in 20—is a scribal effort to attach this chapter to the preceding.

2, 7. These vss. refer back to the man in the linen garment (cf. 9:1, 2, 3b-7, 10, 11), which story they continue. Of the assumed escape of the righteous and the intimated conflagration of the city we have

13 wheels).[11] Their wheels were called
14 whirling wheels in my hearing. Also,
each one had four faces, the face of the
first one was the face of a cherub, and
the face of the second the face of a
man, and the third had the face of a
lion, and the fourth the face of an
15 eagle.[12] Now these [13] were cherubim,
it is the living creature that I saw
16 by the canal Chebar. And when the
cherubim went, the wheels along side of
them went. And when the cherubim
raised their wings in order to mount up
from the earth, the wheels did not leave
17 (these also) [14] their side. When they
stood, these stood, and when they
mounted up these mounted up with
them.
18 Then the glory of Yahweh went forth
from the threshold of the house and
19 stood over the cherubim. And the cherubim
raised their wings and mounted
up from the earth before my eyes, then
they went forth their wheels being beside
them; and they stood [15] at the
door of the east gate, the glory of the
God of Israel being above them.
20 This is the living creature, that I saw
under the God of Israel, by the canal
Chebar. Then I understood that they
21 were cherubim. Each one had
(four) [16] four faces, and four wings,

no description. Has the editor who combined these chapters omitted such important information?

3-6. Difficulties are raised by this section. Why should the cherubim be on the south side of the temple, when all the previous movements have been on the north (cf. 8: 3, 4, 14; 9: 2)? Why should the glory of Yahweh, which in 9: 3 is over the threshold, in 10: 3 be over the cherubim? It is evident that we have here no coherent story, but vss. 3-6 are the work of an interpreter, who failed to harmonize them with the wider context.

Another feature, the glory of Yahweh, is only loosely connected with the chariot and the cherubim in this chapter. It is suggestive of different origins (cf. Introd. xxviii).

When we consider that chapters 10 and 9 present a series of picturesque unrealities for a theological purpose, we need not worry overmuch about the missing story of the conflagration. Establishing the glory of Yahweh and the superiority of the remnant was the desired goal; this accomplished, side issues were of little importance to the writer.

Many of the details of this chapter have been considered in chapter 1.

Vs. 1 is the same as 1: 26, and here it is a scribal intrusion. Whirling wheels is the translation of a word, the root of which means to roll. The noun formations signify something round; e. g., Gilgal, a stone circle. The glowing coals of fire from between the cherubim remind us of the picture in Isa. 6: 6 (cf. 1: 13). The origin of these coals is not indicated, but we may conclude that, as in Isaiah they came from the altar of Yahweh. In Isaiah they were used for cleansing, here their function is one of destruction (cf. Gen. 19: 24; Rev. 8: 5).

Why the cherubim were placed on the south side of the temple is not clear (3). Because the abominable idols in the north would pollute them? Or because they would be defiled by the dead bodies that filled the space between the temple and the altar (9: 7)? Or was it toward the city and hence convenient for the man who was to scatter the coals? If the writer had any definite reason for this disposition of the cherubim, he has left us no clue.

Similarly, we are in the dark as to why the glory of Yahweh went up from the cherubim. Was it because a man should not come too near to deity? Or was it the result of the old taboo prohibiting uncovering the nakedness (cf. Exod. 20: 26)?

The glosses, marked in vs. 7, which completely disregard the injunctions of vs. 2, all indicate theological interest. In measure as we exalt deity, we thrust him farther and farther from man. In vs. 2, and the Septuagint text of 7, the man himself goes in and takes the coals. In the later text of the Hebrew, the man is one farther remove, and the cherubim hands him the coals.

and the form of the hands of a man
22 was under their wings. And as for the
likeness of their faces, they were the
faces that I saw by the canal Chebar.
(their appearances) [17] and they each
went straight forward.

11:1 Then the spirit lifted me up and
brought me to the east gate of the house
of Yahweh, (which faces eastward),[1]
and lo! at the entrance of the gate,
were twenty-five men, in the midst of
whom I saw Jaazaniah, the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah,
2 princes of the people. Then he said,
Mortal man, these are the men who are
devising iniquity and are giving wicked
3 counsel in this city, who are saying,
Has there not recently been the building of houses? This is the cauldron,
4 and we are the flesh. Therefore,
prophesy against them, prophesy, O
mortal man.
5 Then the spirit of Yahweh fell on me

Vs. 12, when compared with the earlier text in 1:18, indicates the riot scribes may work in their eagerness to add as much as possible to the significance of a passage. They were the ancient homiletes!

An important lesson taught in chapters 9 and 10, especially in 10:18, 19, is that Yahweh can live apart from his Holy City. The climax of the tragedy was his removal from the temple and from the city; but in this tragedy was laid the basis for the complete liberation of God and religion from places and ecclesiastical formulæ. It was an important step toward the statement that those who worship the Father must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Chapter 11

11:1-13. POPULAR LEADERS WHO PLOTTED REVOLUTION WILL BE PUNISHED. This is a continuation of the story of the iniquities practised in the temple in Jerusalem, and should immediately follow 8:5-18. Unlike the 3 earlier abominations, 8:5-18, all of which were ritualistic, this takes a secular turn. Twenty-five men, apparently popular leaders, were met by Ezekiel in the temple, where they were holding a caucus meeting. Thus worldly interests had preempted a place in the temple itself. Their acts and plots, however, were also blameworthy. They were rebels and had filled the streets with the slain (vs. 6). This may have been connected with such an episode as the revolt of the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem, who had led the rebellion against Babylon, the suzerain power, and in the time of siege had continued its activities in favor of Egypt. When the army of Nebuchadnezzar withdrew to meet the approaching army of Egypt (Jer. 37:6-11), these men may have felt particularly jubilant. The condemnation of the prophet must have been delivered to them in person, as in high passion, he denounced their actions and declared a coming judgment. It is possible that at the height of his outburst, Pelatiah, one of the leaders, fell dead. The use of proper names, the pointed judgments, and the subsequent emotional reaction, make this one of the realistic passages of the book. It may belong to the crucial period, indicated above, and every feature may be historical. 11:1a has the same literary features as 3:12; 8:3; and 11:24, and is an attempt to connect the following with what precedes. But it is at least superfluous as in the preceding chapter the writer has a commanding view of the east gate (cf. 10:19).

The twenty-five men are not the same as those spoken of in 8:16. These were occupied with civic affairs, while those attended to religious rites. Nor is it likely that Jaazaniah was the same person as the one referred to in 8:11. The father of the one was Azzur, while the other was the son of Shaphan. It might be possible that in one case the grandfather is mentioned and in the other the father, and that the same person figures in both stories; but this is not probable, if we have one writer for both stories. Nothing beyond that indicated here is known of these men or of this group. The names,

and said to me, Say, thus says Yahweh,
Thus have you said, O house of Israel.
For I know the things that are upper-
6 most in your mind. You have multi-
plied your dead [2] in this city, and you
have filled its streets with the slain.[3]
7 Therefore, thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Your slain that (you have placed) [4]
are in her midst, these are the flesh,
and this is the cauldron, but you I will
8 bring out [5] from its midst. You dread
the sword; now will I bring the sword
on you. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
9 Yes, I will bring you out of her midst,
and I will give you into the hands of
strangers, and will execute judgments
10 on you. You shall fall by the sword.
On the border of Israel I will judge
you and you shall know that I am Yah-
11 weh. This shall not be to you for a
cauldron, nor [6] shall you be as flesh
in its midst. On [7] the border of Is-
12 rael I will judge you, and you shall
know that I am Yahweh, because in my
statutes you have not walked, and my
judgments you have not kept, but ac-
cording to the judgments of the nations
round about you, you have acted.
13 Now it happened as I was prophe-
sying, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah
died. Then I fell on my face and cried
aloud and said, Alas (Lord) Yahweh,

Jaazaniah "Yahweh hears," and Pelatiah "Yahweh delivered"—in each of which the name of deity is a constituent element—suggest that these men were of good lineage. Such names were customary only in princely families. They were leaders in some insurgent group in the city; the nature of their wicked counsel is evident (vs. 3). Has there not recently been the building of houses? Or as the Septuagint reads, Have not houses recently been rebuilt? is their question, the answer to which is affirmative. This sign of prosperity was to them evidence of the favor of Yahweh. From this came their conclusion that the city was for them a place of security; it was walled, and they were on the inside, like flesh in a caldron, and were safe. The pot, which in this case was not on the fire, could easily be used as a symbol of danger (24:3-10). In addition to preaching security, these leaders had multiplied the slain (6), for while the city was being besieged, civil strife raged within (7:23; 9:9; 22:6). Pro-Babylonia, pro-Egyptian, and independence parties in Jerusalem were at each other's throats (Jer. 25:8-11; 27:9-17; 28:1-4). A "blood purge," the ancient method by which irresponsible oligarchies hold sway, may have removed some opposition (6, 7, cf. Jer. 26:20-23). Ezekiel and his audience know the situation, and words that mean little to us brought conviction to the listeners. He turns the tables on the leaders. The city is the caldron, but the dead are the flesh (7). They alone are secure. But the leaders, triumphant for the moment, yet fearful of the sword, will be delivered over to foreigners (8-10). This, dying away from their homeland, was one of the greatest of catastrophes (cf. Jer. 22:10-12), a destruction parallel to 6:14 and 2 Kings 25:18-21. This is only a general statement, and it is needless to conclude from it that it is history written after the event.

Vss. 11, 12 are absent from the B text of the Septuagint. Like 5:5-7, the condemnation is because they have followed the customs of strange nations, which suggests influential contacts with outside nations, such as the captivity afforded. Also in both passages, the Deuteronomic element is supreme; hence many have concluded that these vss. are a scribal interpolation. But unquestionably, whoever wrote them was of the prophetic order.

Vs. 13. The death of Pelatiah has caused commentators no end of trouble. Some have conceived that Ezekiel's word uttered in Babylonia had the magic power to strike dead at the distance of eight hundred miles. This need not be taken seriously. The Almighty has scattered his death rays aplenty in the world, but no man has gained the secret of their complete control at such distances.

Others have interpreted this from the point of view of second sight, or far sight, with which the man of God may have been endowed. At this distance, he saw

are you making a complete end of the
remnant of Israel?
14 Then the word of Yahweh came to
15 me saying, Mortal man, your brethren
(your brethren),[8] your kinsmen, even
all the house of Israel, of whom the inhabitants
of Jerusalem say, You are
far [9] from Yahweh, to us (it) [10]
16 the land is given as a possession, therefore
say, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Though I have removed them far off
among the nations, and though I have
scattered them in the countries, yet I
have been to them a sanctuary for a
short time in the countries where they
17 have gone. Therefore say, Thus says
(Lord) Yahweh, I will indeed gather
them [11] from among the peoples and
will assemble them [11] from the countries
where they have been scattered,
and I will give them [11] the land of
18 Israel, and they shall come thither, and
shall remove from thence all her detestable
things and all her abominations.
19 Then I will give them another [12]
heart, and I will put a new spirit in
their inward parts,[13] and I will remove
the stony heart from their flesh,
20 and I will give them a tender heart, so
that they may walk in my statutes and

Pelatiah drop dead while he was writing concerning this profane group. Those accepting this explanation have appealed to experimental psychology to sustain such a possibility. The most serious study of the problem has produced no evidence for any parallel case (Herntrich 89).

Others reduce the story either to legend or to the work of a redactor. Not without force has attention been drawn to the fact that the sermon is complete without vs. 13 (Hermann, 72-3). This, and that like 9: 8, it is strongly interested in the remnant, lends semblance to the conjecture that it is an editorial gloss by a Babylonian scribe.

There remains, however, the strong probability that 13a, narrating the death of Pelatiah, is an integral part of the story, even though 13b should be editorial. Our feet are on solid ground when we read 11: 1b-10 as a message delivered by Ezekiel to the political intriguers, in the temple in Jerusalem. This completely removes all problems of abnormal psychology—which scarcely honors either man or God. What the reaction on one out of a group of twenty-five scheming men might be, when a man like Ezekiel in the name of God faced them with their guilt, no one could predict. But that under such circumstances one might drop dead, no one could deny. It then seems possible that the major part, if not all of vs. 13, may be accepted as historic fact. Such a death would be evidence of divine displeasure and add to the influence of the prophet.

11: 14-21. THE EXILES WILL IN DUE TIME RETURN AND POSSESS THE LAND. There is no certainty whether this was written in Jerusalem or in Babylonia, but that it was composed after the fall of the city in 586 is evident (15-18). This, together with the emphasis on the new heart, which is the reconstruction of national hope by a religious thinker, tends to place it among the latest contributions of Ezekiel.

Your kinsmen is the reading of the Hebrew text. The Septuagint read *captivity* a slightly different word in Hebrew. Probably some of Ezekiel's kinsmen were exiles, and the Hebrew may preserve the correct text. The Septuagint, influenced by late glosses, so many of which were in the interest of the exiles, could easily confuse the two words.

The property of the dispossessed captives, and those who now lived in the city had become a bone of contention (15-17, cf. 7: 12, 13). The inhabitants of Jerusalem quite naturally concluded that those whom Yahweh had punished by sending into captivity, had been dispossessed by Yahweh. With the arrogance of the upstart they claimed all they could. But the prophet opposed two old religious conceptions. The first, was that the Israelite could not worship Yahweh outside of Palestine (16). In the time of David and much later Yahweh worship was limited to the territory of Yahweh (1 Sam. 26: 19). But now Yahweh is a sanctuary to the captives, even in a foreign land.

keep my customs and do them. Then shall they be my people and I will be
21 their God. But those,[14] whose hearts follow after their detestable things and their abominations, I will visit their deeds on their own heads. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

22 Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, the wheels being beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was
23 over them, then the glory of Yahweh ascended from the midst of the city, and stood on the mountain, which is eastward from the city.

Also, we find here the beginning of the end of the teaching that prosperity is a sign of goodness, and suffering is the index to evil. The exiles, those who had suffered calamity, were the worthy Israelites, while those who profited by the downfall of the city were the worthless figs (cf. Jer. 24:1-3). This twofold reconstruction of theological thought is of greater value than all the hopes that were held out for the return of the remnant.

The restoration was, however, a vital part of the thinking of the exiles for a considerable time after the captivities. Some hoped for it immediately, others were wiser and more patient; but all alike had a lively hope in the ultimate power of Yahweh, and in the return of his people to the holy land (cf. Jer. 32: 6-15). So far as we know, Ezekiel made the first serious effort toward the necessary reconstruction. He was involved in the collapse of the state, and we know not how long before he addressed himself to the new needs of the hour. His earliest step probably was in appreciating the quality of character essential for a permanent commonwealth. People so worthy as the exiles will purify the land from the abominations that were practised (18).

But the real source of power will be in the new heart (19). This is an emphasis on inner religious experience that may well have come to expression as a reaction against certain limitations in the legislative reform of 621. A few years sufficed to prove the futility of coercion in religious issues. Effective action must come from the inner springs of life (cf. Jer. 8:11). How quickly the doctrine of the new heart came to full bloom, no one knows. Here a little and there a little, through the decades, is ever the divine method of revelation. In Deuteronomy we have foregleams (Deut. 5:29; 10:16). In Jeremiah, some of which are due to interpretation, are more adequate statements (Jer. 4:4; 31:31-34; 32:38-40), and in Ezekiel, the essential idea of the new heart is repeated again and again (11:19; 36:24-27; 37:7, 9, 14).

They shall be my people and I will be their God, is associated with the doctrine of the new heart (20). The two developed together in the prophets. The relation was ethical and not primarily racial. Earlier, in Hosea, we have a glimpse of it (Hos. 2:23). Jeremiah links the two ideas together (Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 31:1, 33; 32:28). It occurs in a delightful passage in contemporary ritual legislation (Lev. 26:12), and is an integral part of the book of Ezekiel (Ezek. 11:20; 14:10; 36:28; 37:23), while Malachi gives it the most tender and intimate turn in the Old Testament (Mal. 3:17).

Stony heart is a good metaphor for the obdurate will, while heart of flesh indicates responsiveness to the divine will. The word flesh has in it here no suggestion of evil or corruption. Only under later influences does it join the world and the devil to make up a trinity of evil forces.

11:22, 23. YAHWEH DEPARTS FROM THE CITY. This is parallel to 10:18, 19, and is probably the more original. It is unlikely that one writer gave us two such stories; in one the glory of Yahweh leaves the threshold of the house and stands at the east gate (10:18, 19); in the other, it ascends from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain (11:22, 23). It would seem that we have two variants of the same story—which conforms to the

24 Then the spirit lifted me up and brought me to Babylonia, to the exiles, in vision, by the spirit of God. Then the vision I had seen departed from me,
25 and I told the exiles all the things that Yahweh had showed me.

12:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, you are living in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see, but they see not, ears to hear but they hear not, for they
3 are a rebellious house. Now, you, O

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usual Oriental literary practice. They unite in testimony that because of the sins of the inhabitants Yahweh must leave the city. He stood on the mountain, eastward from the city—the mount of Olives—which has been interpreted as an intermediary stage on his way to the exiles in Babylon. While the journey thither is not indicated, Yahweh was a sanctuary to these people for a little time (16). Like chapter 10 these vss. belong to the Babylonian interpretation.

11: 24, 25. THE INTERPRETER, IN VISION, RETURNS TO BABYLON. The spirit and form of 1: 5b-21, 23-25; 3: 11-15; 23b-27; 8: 1-3; 9: 1–10: 22, are in these vss. also. It is a happy method of transporting the prophet from place to place as required. To understand it we need to appreciate the gifts and the methods of the Oriental teacher (cf. Introd. xxvi-xxviii).

DIVISION I. SECTION (d). 12: 1—19: 24

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM A NECESSITY

This, a section of loosely connected oracles, continues the discussion of the coming destruction of city and people. A general analysis may be made as follows:

1. The symbol of the exile, 12: 1-20.
2. Prophecy will not fail, a reply to sceptics, 12: 21-28.
3. False prophets are denounced, 13:1–14: 23.
4. The burnt vine, a symbol of Israel, 15: 1-8.
5. Jerusalem is adulterous, 16: 1-63.
6. Zedekiah is faithless, 17: 1-24.
7. The doctrine of individualism proclaimed, 18: 1-32.
8. Dirges over royalty, 19: 1-14.

Chapter 12

1. 12: 1-20. A SYMBOL OF THE EXILE. The prophet digs through the wall and escapes by night. Vss. 2-7 symbolize the coming captivity in terms similar to those in chapters 4-7. Vss. 8-16 give the interpretation, the prince representing the people. The third division, 17-20, announces that the common people will not escape and the villages in the countryside will be destroyed. It was acted and spoken in Jerusalem some time preceding 586, and has marked similarities with Jeremiah 34: 2-5 (cf. 12: 12, 13). It might be assigned tentatively to the time when the Egyptian army was coming to the relief of Jerusalem (cf. Jer. 34: 6-11). Not only I am a sign to you, verse 11 (cf. 6), but every phase of the symbol proclaims the place and date of origin. Vs. 16, like 5: 3 and 6: 8, gives every evidence of being post-exilic.

12: 1-7. THE CAPTIVITY IS SYMBOLIZED. *Rebellious house* is a characteristic phrase of this prophet, found 5 times in this chapter alone (cf. 2: 5, 6, 8). Eyes to see, but they see not, is repeated throughout O. T. prophecy (cf. Isa. 6: 9; 42: 20; Deut. 29: 4; Jer. 5: 21) and is a picturesque way of saying that the people were unable to draw correct ethical and religious conclusions from national history with which all were familiar. The prophets, who had no canon of scripture to which an appeal could be made, insisted that plague, famine and sword were the evidences of God's displeasure with the conduct of his people. But the house of Israel was rebellious and would not listen (cf. Amos 7: 1-9). The actual cause of this inability to understand correctly the lessons of history, to the mind of the

mortal man, prepare stuff for removal
(and go away as an exile)[1] by day
before their eyes. Yes, you shall go
away from your own place to another
place before their eyes. Perhaps they
may see, though they are a rebellious
4 house. So bring out your stuff, like
stuff for exile, by day before their eyes.
Then you shall go out in the evening
before their eyes, as those who go away
5 into exile. Before their eyes, dig
through (to yourself)[2] the wall and
6 go out[3] through it; (before their
eyes)[4] carry it on your shoulder, go
out[5] in the darkness, cover your face
so that you will not see the land, for I
have made you a sign to the house of
7 Israel. Then I did as I was commanded:
I brought out my stuff by day,
as though it were the stuff of exile, and
in the evening, I myself dug through the
wall (by hand)[6] and in the dark[7]
I went out[8] carrying it on my shoulder,
before their eyes.
8 Then in the morning the word of
9 Yahweh came to me as follows: Mortal
man, has not the rebellious house of
Israel said to you, What are you doing?
10 Say to them, Thus says the Lord Yahweh
concerning the prince, This is the
burden concerning Jerusalem and all
the house of Israel who are in her
11 midst. Say, I am a sign to you. As I
have done, so shall it be done to you.[9]

prophet, lay in their rebellion. The nation was refractory, contentious, willful. The prophets were not modern psychologists, but they were certain that those who violated the laws of God—written in the heart of man—could not think straight on ethical and religious questions.

Stuff for exile (3) consisted of such things as scant food supplies, simple cooking utensils, and highly prized knickknacks, that could easily be tied up in a bundle or two. As in the case of a modern expeditionary force, each individual carried his own rations. All this was to be gathered together during the day, and at night—the time for travel in a tropical climate—he was to shoulder his bundle and march off, as though going into exile. The Assyrian monuments, especially those of the preceding century, picture captives, both men and women, so laden, marching in long files, sometimes with ropes around their necks. But he must dig through the wall preparatory to setting out. By no stretch of the imagination could this be the city wall, which was of stone and of considerable thickness. Such walls in Palestine sometimes attained a thickness of 26 feet. It probably was the slight wall, of two or more feet in thickness, of sun-dried brick, that enclosed his house and private grounds. All this was to be a sign to the house of Israel and must have been enacted before their eyes, in Jerusalem.

12: 8-16. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SYMBOL. As in the earlier chapters 4-7, this is a forecast of the captivity, but the emphasis is different. There, the duration of the captivity was featured; here, the prince, the term used for king Zedekiah (cf. 7: 27) is in the center of the stage. Vss. 12, 13, as they seem to definitely predict the experiences of Zedekiah, are by many considered late, written after the events described. Such statements as, *going out at night, captive to the land of the Chaldeans, he shall not see, though he shall die there*, correspond to the actual history. This seems specially pointed, when we remember that king Zedekiah was blinded by his captors (2 Kings 25: 7). But what this similarity between prophet and historian has been taken to prove, is what it completely disproves. The history is specific, the prophecy is general, and save for two phrases, which are glosses, is vague. In the historical statement, the prince and his followers did not go through a hole in the wall, but through the gate between the 2 walls, by way of the king's garden (Jer. 39: 4). His face was not covered so that he could not see the land, but captured at Jericho he was taken to Riblah, where his eyes were bored out after his officers and his sons had been slain (2 Kings 25: 3-7; Jer. 39: 4-7; 52: 7-11). It may be doubted, whether one familiar with the facts could have inserted vss. 12, 13 in this narrative.

12 You [10] shall go into exile, in captivity,
and the prince, who is in your midst,
shall carry a burden on [12] the shoulder,
and in the dark he shall go out.[13]
He shall dig [14] through the wall, in
order to go through [15] it. He shall
cover his face so that [16] he may not
see (to the eye is it) [17] the earth.
13 Indeed, I will cast my net over him,
and he shall be taken in my snare, and
I will bring him to Babylon, the land of
the Chaldeans, (but he shall not see
14 it) [18] and he shall die there. Also,
all those who are round about him, his
henchmen,[19] and all his troops, I will
scatter to every wind and I will draw
15 out the sword after them. Then shall
they know that I am Yahweh, when I
disperse them among the nations and
scatter them throughout the countries.
16 But I will save a few from among
them from the sword, from famine and
from plague, so that they may describe
all their abominations among the nations
whither they go, so that they may
know that I am Yahweh.
17 Then the word of Yahweh came to
18 me as follows: Mortal man, eat your
food with quaking and drink your water
19 with trembling and alarm, and say to
the country people, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh to those who dwell in Jerusalem
and in the land of Israel, their
food, shall they eat in alarm, and their
water, shall they drink with dismay,
for it follows that her land shall be
desolated of all that is in it, because of
20 the violence of all her inhabitants. The
inhabited villages, also, shall be laid
waste, and the land shall become a
desolation, that they may know that I
am Yahweh.
21 And the word of Yahweh came to me
22 as follows: Mortal man, what means
this proverb that is among you in the
land of Israel, as follows: "The days

They are too vague and too inaccurate to have such an origin. Only 2 insignificant phrases, "to the eye it is," meaning, *this refers to his eye*, and "but he shall not see it," are necessarily *post eventum*. The phrases represent in general what actually happened to every princely captive taken by the Assyrian, and were not meant to be taken literally, any more than were the usual utterances of the prophet. Ezekiel was expressing fundamental, ethical and religious principles, and for vividness availed himself of a wide variety of illustration, simile and symbolism. To confound the essential message with the detail would be to make the letter of the scripture as important as the spirit.

I will cast my net over him, and the following phrases, make Yahweh responsible for the captivity of king and people. This is the doctrine of the prophets. But it is punishment for their rebellion and has an ethical foundation. On this basis disaster can be evidence that Yahweh is God. This is the glory of Hebrew prophecy.

Vs. 16 follows the formulae that close the preceding message and is unconnected with that which follows. It is an orphan, and as an apologetic for those who are in captivity is related to 5: 3, and is evidence that a group of faithful souls preserved their integrity amid the nations.

12: 17-20. SCANT FOOD IS A PRESAGE OF DESOLATION. This is an echo of the predicted food shortage in 4: 9-11, 16, 17. But the ruin is even more wide-sweeping, for all the villages and the country will suffer (cf. 6: 1-6, 11-14). The people of the land are the common people, or country people, as over against the Prince and his *entourage*. At a later period the phrase is used for those who remained in Palestine, as over against those who were in captivity; and still later the meaning changed. That the country community is to suffer indicates the completeness of the coming desolation. True, city and country always suffer together, but the city is the first to suffer, and the first to recover. Country life never knows the luxury and seldom experiences the maddening starvation of the city. In the coming disaster no one will escape.

2. 12: 21-28. PROPHECY CANNOT FAIL, A REPLY TO CRITICS. The accuracy of prophecy is challenged. This is part of a collection of oracles on prophecy, 12: 21–14: 11. Two objections were raised against prophecy. The 1st that the long

23 go by and every vision fails." Therefore,
say to them, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, I will make this proverb cease,
and they shall no longer use it as a
proverb in Israel. So say to them, The
days are near and every vision hastens
24 to fulfilment,[20] for no longer shall
there be any vain vision or flattering divination
25 within the house of Israel. But
I Yahweh will speak that which I speak,
it has been decreed,[21] it shall be
done; it shall be delayed no longer.
Even in your days, O rebellious house,
I am speaking a word and I will perform
it. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
26 And the word of Yahweh came to me
27 as follows: Mortal man, lo! the house
of Israel is saying, The vision that he
sees is for a long time ahead, and he
prophesies for times far removed:
28 Therefore, say to them, Thus says
(Lord) Yahweh, None of my words that

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threatened punishments never came, vss. 21-25; the 2d concluded that Ezekiel's predictions were for a time far distant. The prophet insisted that both interpretations were wrong. Like preceding sections, this was spoken to the Jerusalem community. The proverb (22) and the specific reference to Ezekiel's message (27) seem final testimony to this claim.

The proverb, the days go by and every vision fails, reveals a popular attitude toward the prophet and his message. Prediction seems to have been popularly considered a part of the work of the prophet. In the earlier days, he was sometimes a seer (cf. 1 Sam. 9: 9) who was able to locate lost animals (1 Sam. 9: 6-8, 20) and predict the future (1 Sam. 28: 16-19). In this he functioned in much the same way as did the priests at Delphi and other ancient shrines. But the eighth century prophets denied any relation with these and put an ethical content into the old word for prophet (cf. Amos 7: 14). Henceforth the great prophets were preachers of righteousness, launching their curses against all unrighteousness; but rarely, if ever, functioning as clairvoyants, or as predictors in the narrow sense of that word. Still, the old idea of soothsayer long occupied an honorable place among the masses of the people.

It was here, in this change of function, that grave problems arose. For 5 generations the great prophets had been preaching social justice in terms of doom to the sinful nation. Imposing as were their personalities, and brilliant as were their utterances, the continuous repetition of doom had become monotonous. More than that, the doom had not come. There had been ups and downs, but no essential changes. Children were born, youth married and the aged were gathered to their fathers; famine, pestilence and war continued as ever—and were no respecters of persons; tricksters and oppressors flourished, while often the kindly and the honest suffered. As it was with the individual so was it in the history of nations. The doctrine that righteousness brings prosperity, and wickedness disaster, did not stand the test of history. It is not to be wondered at that under such circumstances scepticism as to the power, or the nature of Yahweh, or of both, should be prevalent. Such questions were raised by the prophets themselves (Jer. 12: 1-3; Hab. 1: 12), and popular thought moved in the same direction (Zeph. 1: 12; Mal. 1: 6). Hence scepticism as to the accuracy of the words of the prophet must have been rife.

While the people were thinking in terms of prediction, or soothsaying, the prophets were the moral leaders of the day. The intent of their imprecations was ethical, not predictive. If the people of Nineveh repented, the will of God had been accomplished, even if Jonah was displeased that his words had not been literally true. That the message of the preacher is always relative, is amply expressed in other scripture (cf. Jer. 18; Joel 2: 14; Jonah).

Ezekiel, facing this scepticism (21-23) does not give a very convincing answer. The days are near, is only repeating what has been in one way or another said for a century and a half. Also he is on the

I have spoken shall be delayed any longer. It has been decreed [21] and it shall be done. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

13:1 And the word of Yahweh came to
2 me as follows: Mortal man, prophesy
against [1] the prophets of Israel,
prophesy,[2] and say (to those who
prophesy from their heart) [3] to
them,[3] Hear the word of Yahweh,
3 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Woe to the
foolish prophets, who follow after their
own mind, so that they see nothing.
4 Like jackals in the ruins are your pro-
5 phets, O Israel. They have not stood
in the breaches, nor have they built
up [4] a wall about the house of Israel,
to stand in the battle in the day of Yah-
6 weh. Having visions [5] that are vain
visions, and divining [5] falsehood, they
say, Oracle of Yahweh. But Yahweh
did not send them. Yet they expect the
7 word will be established. Certainly you
saw a vain vision and uttered a lying
divination. (And these are saying,
Oracle of Yahweh, though I did not
8 send them).[6] Therefore say,[7] Thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, because you have
uttered vain things, and have seen lies,
therefore, behold I am against [8] you.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
9 Indeed my hand shall be against [9]
the prophets who see vain visions and
divine lies. They shall not be in the
circle of my people, nor shall they be
listed in the register of the house of
Israel, nor shall they come back to the
land of Israel. Then you shall know
that I am (Lord) Yahweh.
10 Verily, because they have seduced my
people, preaching peace, when there was

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verge of eschatology in his expressions. That is, he almost pushes the whole ethical problem over into the next world. This is further developed in another chapter where he implied that the world was approaching the end of one age and the beginning of another (chap. 37). The argument with which he crushes his critics is one to which there is no answer, I Yahweh speak that which I speak. This is one of Ezekiel's swift phrases, of which he has many, that puts to silence his opponent (cf. 8:12; 9:9; 11:3, 5; 18:2, 25; 24:13; 33:10, 17; 37:11). Yet it is to be admitted that smart sentences and keen dialectics do not settle life problems.

The second delusion is combatted in vss. 26-28. It is that the disasters so vividly portrayed by Ezekiel are for the generations yet unborn. The prophet insisted that they were immediate. And in fact the city fell and the people were scattered to the 4 corners of the earth, probably a few months after his urgent messages. Yet the message itself, that Yahweh was a God of justice and truth, was of greater importance than any of the episodes of local history.

Chapter 13

3. 13:1–14:23. False Prophecy is denounced.

a. 13:1-16. False prophets condemned.
b. 13:17-23. Prophetesses rebuked.
c. 14:1-11. Idolaters will have no place among my people.
d. 14:12-23. Jerusalem's and Judah's desolation vindicated.

a. 13:1-16. AN ATTACK ON THE FALSE PROPHETS. The text is very corrupt and the futile repetitions preserve the activities of scribes. Repetitions are found in 1c and 3b, 6a and 7a, 8a and 9a, 11 and 13, while 7b and some minor phrases are wanting in the Septuagint. Vss. 1-6, 9-11, 13 have suffixes of the 3d person, while those in vss. 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, are in the second. The Septuagint adds further variety in this respect, and neither in the Hebrew nor the Greek are the suffixes in agreement with the subject matter. So confusing is the text that only a tentative approximation to the original can be suggested and glosses only in part determined. Vs. 9, however, because of its theological outlook, is evidently a late interpolation, probably not earlier than the 4th century B. C.

There is a close kinship between this and sections of the book of Jeremiah, part of which is original and part editorial. The resemblances are too close to be the result of similar environment. But

no peace, these having built a wall,
while these [10] smeared it with whitewash.
11 Say to the smearers of whitewash,
(and it shall fall)[11]. There
shall be a lashing rain-storm, (and I will
make)[12] hailstones shall fall, and a
tempestuous wind shall split it open.[13]
12 And lo! when the wall has fallen, shall
it not then be said, Where is the smear
13 with which you smeared it? Therefore,
thus says (Lord) Yahweh, I, indeed
will let loose, in my wrath, a tempestuous
wind, and in my anger there
shall be a lashing rain-storm, and hailstones
in my wrath,[14] for annihilation.
14 Thus I will tear down the wall that you
have smeared with whitewash, yes, I
will level it to the earth and its foundations
shall be laid bare. It shall fall
and you shall be consumed in the midst

how they are related is not easy to determine. Were the two men in constant conference over their problems? Did the one borrow from the other, or did a later writer rework one or both? The best tentative hypothesis is, that these men were acquainted with each other, and that Ezekiel, the younger, the more reserved and the less conspicuous, was greatly influenced by the ideas and phrases of the older and more adventurous leader. Also the original writings of both prophets were edited and reedited by later scribes (cf. Introd. xxviii). However, it seems evident that the basis of this section, was written in Jerusalem during the closing months of the siege of 586. The walls are breached (5) and the city will be destroyed (14). The additions from later hands, apart from vs. 9, add nothing to the content.

The prophets of Israel here attacked are the *false prophets*. The distinction between true and false prophets was not recognized in early Hebrew life, nor was the cleavage ever very well defined. Each group called the other false, used the same formulæ (Oracle of Yahweh, Thus says Yahweh), made the same claims, and called down the wrath of the same deity on their opponents. Our records, in the main, come from the true prophets, and we are familiar with the abuse they heaped on those who opposed them. No doubt they received in kind, good measure, heaped up and overflowing. Each group was enthusiastic, confident, and probably sincere. It is quite certain that false prophets were even ready to die for their convictions (cf. 1 Kings 18: 25-40).

The false prophets are characterized by Ezekiel, as foolish, as following their own minds, seeing nothing, using divination; and are accused of being jackals and leading the people astray. Calling the enemy such names as fool, diviner, jackal and liar may rouse the mob, but in itself proves nothing. The best of men have been called the worst of names. To be taken seriously epithets must be supported by evidence.

The serious charges made against these men may be summarized as follows: they have not stood in the breaches, nor built a substantial wall for Israel (5); and they have preached peace, peace, when there was no peace (10). They had failed in two ways. Their work had been superficial. They had smeared the surface with whitewash. They should have built foundations and thereon erected solid structures of defence. In other words, in the moral and religious life of the nation, they should have gone to the root of things, and preached those eternal principles of doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with their God on which alone a solid structure can be erected. But it was easier—and more popular—to whitewash than to build.

The 2d accusation, was that they preached peace when there was no peace. Again this was the easy, the popular way (10, cf. Jer. 9: 8-11). It was a comforting message, this superficial optimism. It gained friends and drew crowds to listen to the proclamation of the dawn of the golden age. But such a message was not prophetic. It would not stand the storms of life and the test of history. To a diseased body, the surgeon's knife is the only hope, and a corrupt body-politic

of it, that you may know that I am
15 Yahweh. So will I accomplish my
wrath against the city and against those
who have smeared it with whitewash.
Then it shall be said [15] to you,
Where [16] is the wall, and where [16]
16 are the smearers of whitewash, the
prophets of Israel prophesying to Jerusalem,
and those seeing for her visions
(vision) [17] of peace, when there is no
peace? Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
17 Also you, mortal man, set your face

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can be saved only by drastic measures that remove the diseased tissue. It is this uncompromising insistence on justice, mercy and humility that has placed the O. T. prophets on the front page of world literature. As religious leaders, their gospel included the social and the economic life of the nation as well as a right attitude to Yahweh, expressed in terms of worship.

Foolish (3) — which means, insipid, flabby, faded—is a good description of these prophets. They were on the whole a spineless group, lacking the frontier spirit of such men as Amos and Jeremiah. They followed their own minds (3), gives us the background of the prophet's conception of inspiration. Their ideals came not from mortal man, but from God. With no psychological explanations of their experiences, these men were convinced that in some way their messages originated beyond themselves, that they were permanently worthful, and that to obey them was essential to the well-being of men. Their messages were the demands of the Eternal, though mediated by men.

But the false prophets followed their own minds, and were in agreement with the thought of the day. Their pronouncements were what they had learned in the schools and had picked up from the environment. It was the word that made the individual life easy and brought larger, personal gain. Their thinking was standardized; that of the great prophets was revolutionary. It came not from the populace, nor from the schools, but from the beyond, from God. Such seems to be the theology of Ezekiel.

Vs. 9 pronounces on these prophets, not the disasters that follow siege and captivity, but what is a later idea—and much more serious—exclusion from the religious community. From the time of Ezra on, to be excluded from the *circle of my people* was exceedingly grievous. To the Jew it would be as painful and as humiliating as excommunication would be to a loyal member of the Latin Church. Not to be listed in the national register would be worse than to be a man without a country. Court registers went back to the beginnings of national life (2 Sam. 8:16, 17; Exod. 32:32) and with the passing of the centuries became increasingly important. A strong racial feeling was developed in the experiences of the captivity, and racial consciousness expressed itself vigorously in the reform marriage laws of Nehemiah and Ezra (cf. Neh. 13:23-31). Henceforth a premium was put on pure blood and uncontaminated ancestry. Records, such as abound in the books of Chronicles and in the P. document, became important, and the family tree became the passport to social, religious and national respectability.

They shall not come back to the land of Palestine, which is the opposite of the hope of Ezekiel (cf. 11:14-21), is part of the severe punishment. To be gathered with one's forefathers was the ardent hope of the individual Israelite. These are outcasts, banned from the consolations of proper burial.

The prophets, who should have been builders and leaders, were smearers (10-16). They flattered the people that their social life, though honeycombed with corruption; their ritual, though pagan in the extreme; and their reforms, though superficial, were the will of Yahweh. So the prophet pours out his passion on leaders recreant to their trust.

against [1] the daughters of your people,
who are prophesying out of their own
18 hearts, and prophesy against them, and
say, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Woe to
the women who sew magic bands on all
hands,[18] and put the long veils on the
head of people of every stature, in
order to snare people. You snare some
of my people and some you make live
19 for your own gain. Thus you profane
me among my people for handfuls of
barley and scraps of bread, putting to
death those who should not die, and
keeping alive those who should not
live, by means of your lying to my people
20 who listen to your lies. Therefore
thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Lo! I am
against [1] your magic bands, with
which[19] you are snaring the people,
(as birds) [20] and I will tear them off
your arms, and set free [21] those whom
21 you have snared (as birds).[20] And I
will tear off your long veils, and will
deliver my people out of your hands,
and they shall no longer be as prey in
your hands, and you shall know that I

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b. 13:17-23. THE PROPHETESSES REPROACHED. The text is even more confused than that of the above. Some students have found 2 narratives, 17a, 22, 23, and 18b-21, that have been combined to form the present. But the lines of demarcation are not clear-cut. Others look on it as a pointless, literary effusion. Yet it seems peculiarly realistic. In part, at least, it fits in with conditions in Jerusalem in 586 (cf. Ezek. 8:14, 15) and if Babylonian sorcery is referred to in vss. 18-21, that would prove nothing to the contrary, as for more than a century the Hebrews had borrowed freely and fully from their distant and cultured kinsmen. But that it has been worked over and interpolated at a late period, and that under Babylonian influence, is quite probable.

Only a general relationship exists between this and the preceding paragraph. Favorite phrases of the prophet are repeated (21, 23). Echoes of the charge against the false prophets are found here, and that with little cogency (17, 18, 23). The daughters of my people are said to prophesy, but this can be understood only in the broadest possible sense. Actually they were practising sorcery.

Women had at various times occupied positions of eminent leadership in Israel. Prophetesses had played a part worthy of the name. Miriam, Deborah and Huldah were honored in the religious traditions of the Hebrews. Heroines (2 Sam. 21:8-11), model housewives (Prov. 31:10-31), women of rare charm (2 Sam. 25:18-31; Ruth), and wise women (2 Sam. 14:2; 17:17) played important parts in Israel's history. Yet the fact remains that the Hebrew, like the ancient Semite, had a prejudice against women. They were excluded from the chief court of the temple and could hold no official position in the priesthood. And the old tradition held that woman was the immediate cause of the Fall. Nor can the prophets be accused of sparing them. For scorn, nothing surpasses the denunciation of the follies of women by some of the prophets (Amos 4:1-3; Isa. 3:16-26). At no time do we find more violent attacks on them than now, the period of distress (cf. Jer. 44:15; Ezek. 8:14).

These prophetesses were traffickers in magic. The methods they used cannot now be reconstructed. Magic bands on the wrists were amulets of some sort, used for purposes not described. Amulets were believed to have power to protect the wearer from certain evils—because of the spell pronounced over them. They were supposed to be inhabited by a spirit, and thus often involved the worship of a spirit other than Yahweh. While they claimed to be in the service of Yahweh, they were related to illicit cults, and like all magic were anti-ethical.

It is important to recognize that while remnants of superstition may have long remained in the ritual of Judaism, from an early period there was a persistent effort to ban all such from the worship of Yahweh (cf. 1 Sam. 28:3; 2 Kings

22 am Yahweh. Because you have made sorrowful the heart of the righteous, (falsehood)[22] whom I never made sorrowful, and have strengthened the hands of the wicked so that he does not turn from his wicked way to save his

23 life; therefore, you shall not see vain visions, nor practise divination any longer, for I will deliver my people from your hand, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.

9:22; Exod. 22:18; Deut. 18:10-12; Lev. 19:26, 31; Jer. 27:9, 10). The cleansing process was at work in all periods, when there was creative religious leadership.

The long veils are nowhere described, but their function is in part indicated (18). The most plausible interpretation is that these women professed to be able, by means of garments and magical formulæ, to snare the essential spirit of whomsoever they desired. Having caught this spirit, they could then do with it as they chose. Superstitions like this are very wide-spread. The belief that if one can obtain possession of some of the hair, or nails, or a piece of the garment of an individual, whatsoever is done to this happens to the owner (cf. 5:1-4; 1 Sam. 25:29). By beating, piercing, or burning the part, or the effigy of the person, the person himself may thus be tortured or slain. It is this, the principle of sympathetic magic, that lay behind the activities of these women.

The charge brought against these sorceresses, was that they put to death some people who should live, and made live some who should not live (20). No doubt they claimed such power, and many believed and patronized them. Such practices and beliefs are world-wide. In Europe and America, until recent days, witches were believed to exercise malign power over crops, cattle and people, even to the power of death. Based on this belief, good men and women have been drowned and burned—for the glory of God. It is not strange that Ezekiel shared this superstition with the men of his own generation. It was an easy explanation for many of the inexplicable happenings in daily experience. Why did this man die? A witch was the one cause that could not be disproved. But it is strange that Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Knox and the Puritans had not outgrown this mode of reasoning.

They are further accused of practising this pagan cult for handfuls of barley and scraps of bread. They were making their living from that which was under the religious ban. This involves a wide-sweeping principle. Must a man, in order to live up to the prophetic standard, always earn his bread and butter only by such means as have the sanctions of the highest morality and religion? In general, we all assent with enthusiasm; in particular, some falter. In a machine age, with a highly competitive system, the golden rule is more popular in theory than in practice.

The prophet is convinced that all such superstitions and vain visions will in the future cease to be (20-23). The ways and means thereto are not indicated. That Yahweh will do it, is his confidence. History has shown us the process by which magic disappears. The development of intelligence, the persistent search for facts and causes, have given light where even the prophets were in darkness. The laboratory has shown us the stuff out of which amulets are made, and the *hocus-pocus* of the sorcerer has been weighed and found wanting. The prophet enunciated great principles—sometimes the scientist provides the reasons. Both cooperate to ban superstitions from the realm of religion.

Such ritual practices are considered the abettors of wickedness (22). They are a grief to the godly and a strength to all types of evil, thus bringing calamity on the land. All who practise any type of divination must, for the sake of *my people*, be cut off out of the land (23).

14:1 Then certain of the elders of Israel
2 came to me and sat before me. And
the word of Yahweh came to me as fol-
3 lows: Mortal man, these men have
taken their filthy images into their
hearts, and the stumbling-block of their
iniquity they have set before their faces,
shall I actually permit [1] myself to be
4 inquired of by them? Therefore, speak
with them and say to them, Thus says
(Lord) Yahweh, Every man of the
house of Israel who takes his filthy im-
ages into his heart and sets the stum-
bling-block of his iniquity before his
face, and then comes to the prophet, I,
Yahweh, will answer him for myself,[2]
according to the multitude of his filthy
5 images, so that I may lay hold of the
hearts of the house of Israel, that is
estranged from me because of their
filthy images (all of them).[3]

6 Therefore say to the house of Israel,
thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Turn, turn
back from your filthy images and turn
your faces away from all your abomi-
7 nations. For every man of the house
of Israel, or of the resident aliens who
dwell in Israel, who is estranged from
me, taking his filthy images into his
heart and placing the stumbling-block
of his iniquity before his face and then
comes to the prophet to enquire from
him of me, I, Yahweh, will answer him
8 for myself, and I will set my face
against that man and will make him [4]
a sign and a byword, and will cut him
off from among my people, that you
may know that I am Yahweh.
9 Also, the prophet, if he be deceived
and speak a word, I, Yahweh, have de-
ceived that prophet, and I will stretch
my hand against him and will destroy

Chapter 14

c. 14: 1-11. IDOLATERS WILL HAVE NO PLACE AMONG *My People.* This is an attack on false worship, and has been interpreted in widely different ways. All, or a part of it—especially vss. 3-5—has been considered post-exilic. Close verbal affinities to the Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26) have been tabulated as evidence for this conclusion (Hölscher 83-87). It has even been designated midrashim, and the word for resident alien has been translated proselyte, thus bringing it down to a very late period; and again it has been fitted into the reign of Manasseh (Smith 32, 33). But unless it is a purely literary product, it originated in Palestine. Idolatry was, no doubt, a popular post-exilic practice among the Jews, but the chief attacks on it were pre-exilic rather than later. It is improbable that such a charge would be brought against the people in captivity. The elders of Israel, in vs. 1, as in 20: 1, are not to be identified with the elders of Judah in 8: 1. If the phrase is not a gloss by a scribe who wished to link up this chapter with the earlier one, it quite naturally refers to elders from the North. Many of these people never lost contact with the South. After the fall of Samaria, Jerusalem was, for long centuries, the chief sanctuary for many Israelites, and they felt a keen interest in her destiny. It would be strange indeed if none from the house of Joseph should in hours such as these seek an oracle from Yahweh from his prophets in Jerusalem.

The linguistic features of the paragraph do not mark it as late. In fact, it savors more of Deuteronomy than of Holiness Code. The attitude toward the resident alien, who is considered an integral part of the community, lines up with that of Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 1: 16; 26: 11; 29: 10; 14: 21; 10: 18, 19; 14: 29, also Lev. 17: 8-15; 18: 26; 19: 23; 20: 2; 22: 18), also the denunciation against idolatry is more in keeping with the spirit of Deuteronomy than with Holiness Code (cf. Deut. 17: 2-7; 6: 14, 15; 13: 4-10). Add to this the fact that Ezekiel's favorite word for idol, filthy image, is found here so frequently, there seems no good reason for denying the authorship of the section to Ezekiel himself. The pet words, the repetitions, the theological phrases are all in the style of the prophet and may belong to the period immediately preceding 586. Thus the elders of Israel—that is the North—were included in his attacks on religious leaders.

him out of the midst of my people
10 Israel. Indeed, they shall bear their
iniquity. The guilt of the one who
inquires shall be as the guilt of the
11 prophet, so that the house of Israel may
not again stray from me. But they
shall be my people and I will be their
God. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

12 And the word of Yahweh came to
13 me as follows: Mortal man, if the land
sin against me by acting faithlessly, I
will stretch out my hand against it and
I will break its staff of life and will
send famine on it and will cut off from
14 it man and beast. If three men were in
its midst, Noah, Daniel, and Job, these

14: 1-11. THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL SOUGHT AN ORACLE. Apparently their desire was to learn the outcome of the siege. To seek an oracle from Yahweh had long been a common custom. By various methods, through the priest (cf. 1 Sam. 23: 2-9; 2 Sam. 5: 19), or through the prophet (cf. 1 Sam. 9: 5-9; 1 Kings 14: 1-12; 2 Kings 22: 5-16; Isa. 37: 2, 3; Jer. 38: 14-16), the inquirer endeavored to obtain from Yahweh an answer to his perplexities. Witchcraft had at an early date been banned as disloyalty to the God of Israel (1 Sam. 28: 8-10), as Yahweh was competent to meet all the needs of his people (2 Kings 1: 6).

Idol, or filthy image, (Note Com. 6: 5). They have taken their filthy images into their heart, is a strong statement, implying that idolatry occupied so central a place in their thought and emotions that they had dedicated themselves body, soul, and spirit, to these idols. Such apostasy would probably be more marked in the North than in Jerusalem and Judah. Foreign worship surrounded them, and like their fathers they had probably incorporated alien forms into their local Yahweh ritual. This would be peculiarly displeasing to the Jerusalem prophet to whom it would be largely unfamiliar. What was displeasing to the prophet must surely be displeasing to his God, for not only was Yahweh a jealous God but he was holier than man. Hence, Yahweh could not permit himself to be inquired of by idolaters. Indeed, so great was their guilt that judgment lay beyond the power of man. The face of Yahweh himself will be set against them, and they will be separated from his people (8). The resident alien who is disloyal must suffer the same condemnation as the home-born (7).

My people, used so frequently in chapters 13, 14, is a preparation for those later messages in which to be a member of the elect nation is the greatest possible good.

I, Yahweh, have deceived that prophet (9), is a phrase that represents an intermediate stage in Hebrew thinking. By the middle of the 6th century B. C., as a result of much profound thinking, the leaders had reached the conclusion that Yahweh formed light and created darkness, made peace and created evil (Isa. 45: 7). This was the dogmatic statement of monotheism. Hence the logical conclusion was that all evil as well as all good must come from the one and only God. The same idea in almost the same words is found in Jer. 20: 7, and variants of it are found in 1 Kings 22: 20, and Job 1: 6-12. However, having become monotheists, the Hebrew thinkers were soon faced with the problem of the source of evil. Many objected to that thoroughgoing monotheism that made God ultimately responsible for sin. A later age solved the problem by laying responsibility on the devil.

The prophet who seeks an oracle from Yahweh for the idolater is an accomplice and as such must bear a like punishment. The great hope on which a nation can be permanently built is the blotting out of such prophets and such people. No doubt such would aid in the establishment of the kingdom.

d. 14: 12-23. THE DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM AND JUDAH VINDICATED. This differs entirely from the preceding vs. 12.

on the ground of their righteousness
could save [5] but themselves. Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh.
15 Or,[6] should I send wild beasts
throughout the land, and bereave it,[7]
so that because of the wild beasts it
would become a waste without a
16 passer-by, though these three men were
in her midst, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh,
they could save neither sons nor daughters.
They alone would be saved, and
the land would be a waste.
17 Or should I send a sword against that
land and give the command, "Sword
pass through the land," then I would
18 cut off man and beast. Though these
three men were in her midst, by my
life, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh, they
could not save sons or daughters, but
they alone would be saved.
19 Or should I send a plague on the
land, and pour out my wrath against
it in blood, to cut off from it man and
20 beast, though Noah, Daniel, and Job
were in her midst, by my life, Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh, neither son nor
daughter could they save. On the
ground of their righteousness they could
save but themselves.
21 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, how much
more, when I send my four evil judgments,
sword, and famine, wild beasts,
and plague on [8] Jerusalem to cut off
from her man and beast.
22 And lo! should there be left in her
any escaper, who might send out [9]

It is almost poetic, indeed Moffatt has turned it into strophic form. The refrain oracle of Yahweh, and the hypothesis, *if I should do so and so,* are each found four times. In it there is also a strongly apologetic tone. It asserts the justice of Yahweh in his drastic judgment on Jerusalem and Judah. Further, it is akin to the doctrine of individualism that is argued in 33:1-10 and 18:1-24—which seem to be exilic, or later. Add to this the fact that vss. 21-23, which may be supplementary, by an unanswerable illustration, assert the superiority of the captivity of Jehoiachin 597 B. C. over the poor trash who remained in the country and city, a few of whom escaped the destruction of 586. These vss., and probably the whole section, were written in the interest of the Babylonian exiles and come from a time after the 2d captivity. There are, however, no historical or literary criteria that aid us in determining the date more definitely. The suggestion by King (*Legends of Babylon and Egypt* 133, 134), that we find here an imitation of the Babylonian Gilgamesh epic, xi: 180-194, rests on a very insecure foundation. While Ezekiel's authorship of this section has been seriously questioned, the literary texture and the mental attitude are not out of harmony with that of the prophet.

If the land sin, is an hypothesis that has much the same theological background as 6:1-7, and is based on the same interpretation of man's relation to the physical universe. Land and people sin and suffer together. The faithless land deserves punishment (cf. Isa. 5:1-6), and when that comes, the inhabitants can in no wise escape. In this case, the place was so corrupt that the four messengers of the wrath of Yahweh, famine, savage beasts, the sword and plague, had swept over it and left nothing but desolation. The most renowned saints in Hebrew tradition could have saved none but themselves, so gross was the apostasy. Hence Yahweh was completely justified in this drastic visitation on Palestine and Jerusalem.

Noah, Daniel and Job were the names of ancient worthies, long remembered for their good deeds (cf. Jer. 15:1; Isa. 54:9; Ezek. 28:3). About them we know but little. The story of Noah thrusts him back into the dim dawn of history and makes him a saviour of mankind (Gen. 6:8–9:29). Job, the hero of the book that now bears his name, was a just man whose prayer for his accusers delivered them from the wrath of Yahweh that was kindled against them (Job 42:7-10). Daniel also stands out in Hebrew tradition as a deliverer of his people. Enough is found in our book of Daniel, written probably three or four centuries

sons or daughters, and should these [10]
go out to you, when you see their con-
duct and their acts, then you will take
comfort concerning the calamity that I
brought on Jerusalem, even everything
23 that I brought on her. Yes they will
comfort you, when you see their con-
duct and their acts. Then you will
know that not without cause did I do
all that I have done to her. Oracle of
(Lord) Yahweh.

15:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me:
2 Mortal man, how much better is the
wood of the vine than any other wood
(the branch) [1] which is among the
3 trees of the forest? Do they take [2]
wood from it to make anything? Or
do they take from it a peg on which to
4 hang any vessel? Look, it is put into
the fire to be burnt. The fire burns
both ends, and the middle of it is
scorched. Is it then good for anything?
5 See, when it is whole it is used for
nothing, much less when fire burns it
and it is scorched can it then be used
for anything.
6 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
even as the wood of the vine among the
trees [3] of the forest which I have put
in the fire to burn so have I given over
7 the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Indeed I
have set my face against them; from
the fire they have come forth, yet the
fire will consume them, and you [4]
8 shall know that I am Yahweh, and I
will make the land a desolation because
they have acted faithlessly. Oracle of
(Lord) Yahweh.

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later than Ezekiel, to prove the esteem in which he was held. But discoveries at Ras Shamra, Syria—almost opposite the eastern point of Cyprus—during excavations carried on in 1927-1931, prove that the name Daniel was well known in Syrian tradition in the 14th century B. C. Hence these three men were exemplars of justice, and two of them and possibly even the third, were renowned as deliverers of great sinners. But honored as they were, were they in Jerusalem they could save none but themselves. That is, the prophet considered the city and the country more corrupt than the antediluvians. Hence the judgments of Yahweh were just.

The doctrine of individualism is closely related to this argument (cf. 3:16-21; 18:1-24; 33:1-10). It is here assumed that an individual who is righteous will be delivered from a general calamity.

Vss. 21-23, follow on from 12-20, but the theme is changed. In the Hebrew text there is no suggestion of *Remnant* which has been introduced into the King James version and others, owing to theological interest (22). If any of the escapers should arrive among the Babylonian captives, their conduct would be final proof that Yahweh was justified in wiping out the city (22, 23, cf. 6:9, 10). These apostates were the moral and religious riffraff of Judah (cf. 12:16; Jer. 24:8-10).

But the subtle teaching of vss. 21-23 is that *my people* in reality were the Babylonian captives. This judgment, repeated in 11:17, was also the conviction of Jer. 24:1-10.

Chapter 15

4. 15:1-8. A SYMBOL OF ISRAEL, A BURNT VINE. The destruction of Jerusalem is still the theme. It fits in with the messages of the prophet against the city uttered preceding 586 B. C. Vs. 8, an addition with priestly phrasing, such as *acting treacherously* (cf. 14:13; 18:24) is probably late.

The vine, grown throughout most parts of Palestine, and highly prized, is used as an illustration to point the message. Though the fruit is large and luscious, the wood is of little value; it cannot be used for the manufacture of yokes, ploughs, or even pegs. As fire-wood it is inferior to common wood. The people of Jerusalem, because of the siege and captivity in 597, are like a piece of grapevine burnt at both ends and charred in the middle, and now Yahweh has set his face against them so that they will be completely consumed.

16:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, make known
3 to Jerusalem her abominations, and say, thus says (Lord) Yahweh to Jerusalem, your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.
4 As for your birth, on the day when you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water for

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Chapter 16

5. 16:1-63. JERUSALEM IS ADULTEROUS. The main divisions are:

- a. 1-43. An allegory of Jerusalem:
  - 1-7, a foundling;
  - 8-14, the bride of her rescuer;
  - 15-34, an unfaithful wife;
  - 35-43, punishment deserved.
- b. 44-52. Jerusalem has foreign ancestry; is the sister of Samaria and Sodom, but more profligate than either.
- c. 53-63. Restoration is promised Jerusalem and her sisters, because (59-63) Yahweh always keeps his covenant.

In this, the longest chapter in the book, there is a general unity, with 3 well-marked divisions. In the 1st division, vss. 1-43, the amazing disloyalty of Jerusalem is presented in the form of an allegory. As an outcast child, she is rescued and grows up (1-7). The woman matured, is betrothed and becomes the bride of her rescuer (8-14). As a wife, she becomes the most lewd of public women (15-34). This is the religious history of Jerusalem and Judah in allegorical form. As the adulterous wife richly deserves punishment, so also does Jerusalem (35-43). There is every reason to accept this as coming from Ezekiel, and it may have been written in Jerusalem, like so many other sections, shortly before the fall of the city in 586. It is as scathing a judgment as anything written by the prophet. But he knew the inside situation and never moderated his message because he spoke or wrote to his own people. The present form suggests that we have a literary product rather than a word spoken in the heat of controversy or distress. But even as such, its most significant appeal would be in Jerusalem at the above suggested date.

The 2d division, vss. 44-52, asserts that Jerusalem is worse than were Samaria and Sodom. This also is a work of the study. Its tone, however, the sins reckoned to Sodom (49, 50) and the punishment meted out to Jerusalem (52), suggests that the siege and fall of the city lie in the past and that this is an apologetic for the catastrophe. Spirit and style are not foreign to Ezekiel, but if written by the prophet, it came from his pen not earlier than 580.

The last section, vss. 53-63, has two divisions. The first, 53-58, predicts the restoration of Sodom, Samaria and Jerusalem. It is formally linked with vss. 44-52, and has the same emphasis on arrogance and on shame, but scarcely belongs to the activity of Ezekiel. The closing paragraph in 59-63, which is an appendix, uses the language and illustrations of the 2d and 3d divisions of the chapter; the spirit, however, seems to be that of a much later period.

The whole chapter has an Oriental form and flavor somewhat foreign to our Western mind. Like so much of Ezekiel, and indeed like a good deal of the O. T., the literary form combines primitive and imaginative qualities that present vividly the intended message. It is neither analytic nor argumentative, but is illustrative and assertive. In this way the impression is overwhelming. In its speech it is also plain; it calls a spade a spade. Some of the phrases may be off color to us, but so were not a few of those used by the Puritans. All were readily understood by ancient hearers and readers and the plainest of them in every

cleansing,[1] neither were you salted
5 nor swaddled. No eye pitied you to
do for you out of compassion any of
these things, but you were thrown out
in the open field in the day of your
birth, through loathing of your person.
6 But I passed by you and noticed you
struggling about in your blood,[2] and
said to you in your blood,[2] Live,
(and I said to you in your bloods,
7 Live),[3] grow up [4] like the plant of
the field. (I have given you)[5] And
you grew up and matured and came to
the age of puberty.[6] Your breasts [7]
were developed and your hair had
grown, but you were nude and exposed.
8 Again I passed by you and saw you
and lo! the time of love had come to
you. So I spread the corner of my
mantle over you and covered your

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generation point a lesson in religious loyalty. On the whole the allegory is full of charm as well as tremendous vigor.

a. 16:1-43. AN ALLEGORY OF JERUSALEM.

16:1-7. JERUSALEM AN OUTCAST CHILD is rescued by a passer-by and grows up to womanhood. In sketching national history in the form of an allegory, Ezekiel goes back to origins. Jerusalem—and as the chief city in Judah her name was almost synonymous with that of the nation—is the outcast child. Her birth and origin were from the land of Canaan. Not until the time of David did this, the Holy City, become a part of the life of the nation (2 Sam. 5:6-13; Ezek. 21:30; 29:14). A closer analysis showed that her ancestry was Amorite and Hittite (3). This, a swift summary of racial affiliations and cultural inheritance, was the unpalatable truth (cf. 21:30; 29:14). The Amorites, a West-Semitic group, had sent a stream of migrants into Palestine from the north (2300 to 1700 B. C.). They were a hardy people, who conquered the hill-country, built many strong-walled cities and as feudal princes controlled many parts of the country. The Hittites, a non-Semitic people, came from the farther north. Hurri is probably a better name for them, and their early habitat was in the land of Armenia. Groups of these people also entered Palestine shortly after 2000 B. C. Evidence of their presence in the land has been found in Taanach, Beisan, Jerusalem and other centers. Horite in the O. T. is probably a reminiscence of this race, and Hebron was one of their important areas. Amorite and Hittite thus met in many parts of the country, lived and worked together, and in the course of the centuries so intermarried that racial origins must, in many cases, have been completely forgotten. Jerusalem, then, at the time of the conquest, must have had a large mixture of blood, of which Amorite and Hittite were two important streams. The same thing is true of pre-Davidic tribal Israel. Tribes with experiences in Egypt, tribes from the wilderness of the south, tribes out of the eastern deserts, some entering the land around 1400, others not earlier than 1200, settled in various districts of Palestine, mixed freely with the earlier population, Canaanite, Amorite, Hittite and other smaller groups, and ultimately became known as Israelite. Israel's beginnings, thus characterized, were not only pagan, but were without promise, and tragic. The lowliness of national origins is scarcely overdrawn in this allegory. The other side of the picture, the golden age in the past, is presented by other prophets (Isa. 1:21, 26; Jer. 2:2; Hos. 9:10). This pathetic picture of the unloved, outcast child (4-6) throws into bright relief the tenderness and pity of Yahweh. It was he who took the initiative and ministered to the waif with the tenderness of a mother, and gave her the opportunity of life, so that she developed into splendid womanhood (6, 7).

16:8-14. THE MATURE WOMAN BECAME THE BRIDE OF HER RESCUER. This is the 2d act in the drama. Yahweh passed by again. He loved Israel, betrothed her to

nakedness and pledged myself to you
and made a covenant with you. Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh. Thus you were
9 mine. Then I bathed you in water and
thoroughly washed off your blood[2]
10 and anointed you with oil; and dressed
you up in variegated stuff and gave you
shoes of seal skin, and girdled you with
fine linen, and veiled you with silk.
11 Then I decked you out with ornaments;
I put bracelets on your arms, and a
12 necklace about your neck, and I put a
ring in your nose, and circlets in your
ears, and a beautiful crown on your
13 head. Thus, with gold and silver you
were adorned, and your garments were
linen and silk and variegated stuff.
Fine flour and honey and oil you ate,[8]
and you were exceedingly beautiful.
(And you succeeded to royal estate).[9]
14 Then, because of your beauty, your
fame spread among the nations, for it
was perfect because of my adornment
that I had put on you. Oracle of
(Lord) Yahweh.
15 But you trusted in your beauty, and
you played the harlot because of your
fame, and you freely poured out your
harlotries on every passer-by. (Let it
16 be to him).[10] And you took some
of your garments and made gaily decorated
highplaces for yourself and played
the harlot at them. (Neither do you
17 enter nor shall it be).[11] Also you
took your beautiful jewelry of gold and
silver that I gave you, and made yourself
male images and played the harlot
18 with them. Then you took your variegated
garments and covered them, and my
oil and my incense you placed[12] be-

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himself and entered into the marriage relation with her. Hosea's figure of the husband and wife lies in the background of this symbolism (Hos. 2:1-23; 9:10; 11:1-4; 13:4, 5). To spread the skirt over one was a figure for marriage (Ruth 3:9; Deut. 23:1, M. T.). Bathing, anointing with oil, dressing in garments as beautiful as were permitted by the means of the father or husband of the bride were all a part of the usual ritual in an Oriental marriage (Esther 2:12; Ruth 3:3; cf. Isa. 61:10; Cant. 3:11). Some of the articles of dress are not certain. Variegated stuff may be richly woven. Sealskin is probably correct, and if so was made from the hide of the sea-cow captured in the Red Sea. The word translated silk is uncertain. Silk was not raised in Palestine, so far as we know, until the Persian period, nor is there any record of its importation at an earlier date. Decked out in the ornaments as described, the bride was a glorious creation. In Palestine this was her one great day in what otherwise was often a drab existence. Thus Israel is presented as world-famed for her beauty. In all this Yahweh took the initiative and was the sole and responsible agent. Yahweh elected Israel for his own name's sake. This allegory is easily paralleled with the actual religious history of the people. The betrothal answers to the Sinaitic covenant (Exod. 19:3-18; 24:3-8). The maturity, the bridal adornment and the world-fame most naturally bring us to the days of the kingdom.

16:15-34. THE WIFE, BEAUTIFUL, HONORED AND FAMED BECOMES UNFAITHFUL. Such is the third scene in the drama. Her infidelities are repeated here, *ad nauseam.* The immoralities of the wife and the idolatries of the city are interlocked in the story. In fact, in Canaan, popular religion—which was frankly fertility worship—and harlotry were often united. Baal of Canaan was the god of fertility and Astarte was his consort. Religious rites, which were usually symbolic, capitalized the reproductive functions of the soil and of the animal world. Their festivals, especially that of the springtime, centered in the thought of increase, of the flocks, the corn, the wine and the oil. Among some ancient peoples prostitution formed part of the ritual of such festivals. It assumed a sacred character and was a dedication to the deity. In this way, it was believed, fields, cattle and tribe were favored by the god. Such worship often gave a religious sanction to passion. Apparently too many Israelites succumbed to these temptations. The prophets lay much of the blame on false worship or idolatry (cf. Hos. 1:2-9;

19 fore them. My food that I had given you,
(fine flour and oil and honey I had
provided as your food),[13] you placed
before [14] them as a sweet savor. (and
it was) [15] Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
20 You also took your sons and daughters
whom you had borne to me [16] and you
sacrificed these to them as food. Was
that a more trivial matter than your
21 harlotry? Indeed you slaughtered my
sons and you gave them up to them, in
causing them to go through fire.
22 Thus with all your abominations and
your harlotry you have not remembered[17]
the days of your youth, when
you were nude, and exposed, struggling
23 about in your blood. So it happened
after all your wickedness (Alas, alas to
24 you, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh) [18] that
you have built for yourself a vaulted
chamber and you have made a shrine
for yourself in every open place, at
25 every street crossing [19] you have built
your shrine, and made your beauty a
filthy thing and exposed openly your
person to every passer-by and have
multiplied your harlotries.
26 You played the harlot with your
neighbors, the Egyptians, strongly sexed,
and multiplied your acts of harlotry
that you might provoke me to anger.
27 (Behold now I have stretched out my
hand against you and I have cut off
your portion, and I have given you into
the power of those who hate you,
even the Philistine women, who were
shamed because of your adulterous conduct.) [29]
28 Also you played the harlot
with the Assyrians, because you
were not sated. Indeed, you played the
harlot with them, and still you were not
29 sated. Further you multiplied your
whoredom with the land of (Canaan) [21]
Chaldea, but yet were not
30 sated. (How weak is your heart, Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh).[22] When
you do all of these things, it is the conduct
of an unattached woman, a harlot,
31 when you build your vaulted chamber
at every street crossing and you
make [23] your shrine in every open
place. Yet you have not been [24] like a
harlot, collecting [25] the harlot's hire.
32 (The adulterous woman takes strangers
33 in place of her husband).[26] To all
harlots gifts are given, but you have
given your gifts to all your lovers. Indeed
you have bribed them to come in
to you from all around for your harlotries.
34 To you it was quite different
from other women in their harlotry,
(and after you no one went awhoring
and) [27] in that you gave harlot's hire,
while harlot's hire was not given to you.
Thus you were different.
35 Therefore, harlot, hear the word of

Amos 2:7, 8; and the various laws, Deut. 22:16-25; 23:17, 18; Lev. 20:10-21). The description of the unfaithful wife is utterly revolting, but it probably approximated the actual life (24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29).

Idolatry is thus the fundamental charge brought against the city. In the days of her glory, during the reigns of David and Solomon, her contacts had been worldwide, and religious practices had been introduced into Jerusalem from every part of the world. The simple ways of earlier worship were no longer acceptable. The temple was built and decorated, and adequate ritual had to be developed. Religious forms and ideals were introduced from Phœnicia, Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia for the enrichment of the religious life of the nation. But most of these changes were foreign to the simple rites of the early days. These ceremonies belonging to Baal, Melkart, Ashur, Marduk and Astarte were hateful to Yahweh, who had from early days been a jealous God; and they were the cause of apostasy and national downfall.

The list of idolatries, though probably far from complete, is clear evidence of the degradation in pagan religion. They decorated high places (referring to the very prevalent hillside worship); they used their gold and silver to make male images (used for phallic worship), and made offerings of food to them (17-19); they offered human sacrifices to these gods (20, 21); built special shrines in the public squares for their filthy images, whatever they were, and debauched themselves therewith (23-25). They were devotees of fertility worship, at its very worst.

Further, their international contacts

36 **Yahweh, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Because
your lust was poured out [28] and
your nakedness was exposed through
your whoredoms with [29] your lovers,
and because of all the filthy images of
your abominations, and because of the
slaughter [30] of your sons that you**
37 **offered [31] to them, therefore behold,
I am gathering all your lovers for whom
you have lusted,[32] and all whom you
have loved, with all whom you have not
loved; now I will gather them against
you from round about and I will expose
your nakedness to them, that they may**
38 **all see your nakedness. And I will
pronounce on you the judgment [33]
pronounced on adulterous women and
women guilty of bloodshed, and I will
bring on you blood, wrath, and jealousy.**
39 **And I will give you into their hands,
and they shall throw down your vaulted
chamber and break down your shrines
and shall strip you of your clothes and
take away your beautiful jewelry, and
they shall leave you nude and exposed.**
40 **They shall bring against you a company
and shall stone you with stones
and cut you down with their swords.**
41 **They shall burn your houses with fire,
and thus execute judgment in the sight
of many women. Thus will I put an
end to your harlotry and also harlot's**
42 **hire you shall give no more. Then
will I rest my anger from you, and will
turn away my jealousy from you. And
I will be quiet and will be provoked**
43 **no more. Because you have not remembered
[34] the days of your youth and
have enraged me [35] in all these ways,
behold [36] I also have brought your
acts on your own head.[37] Oracle of
(Lord) Yahweh. (And have you not
practised unchastity above all your
abominations?).[38]**
44 **Behold, every one using proverbs
shall use this proverb against you, saying,
As the mother so her daughter.**
45 **You are your mother's daughter. She
loathed her husband and her children.
The sister of your sisters [39] are you.
They loathed their husbands and their
children. Your mother was a Hittite**
46 **and your father an Amorite. And your
older sister is Samaria. She and her**

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added to the disintegration of both their ethics and their religion. The two evils denounced, harlotry and idolatry, were so interrelated as to seem inseparable. While the allegory, on the whole, is an attack on idolatry, many of the phrases in this section, especially in 26-34, scarcely allow any interpretation save adultery. National affiliations with Egyptians, Assyrians and Chaldeans, whether in commerce, as a subject people, or in intrigue, definitely affected the ethical practices and religious ideals of the people. Also the accusation is that in her relation to these nations Israel has been worse than any other people. Ordinarily the harlot had her hire, but Israel bribed her seducers (31-34).

16: 35-43. PUNISHMENT DESERVED. In alliances with other nations the usual thing is to obtain some advantage, but Israel gave everything and gained nothing (35-43). Endowed splendidly by Yahweh, she wasted her inheritance in riotous living. According to the law, the adulterous woman must be tried by the community and then stoned (Deut. 23: 21; 22: 22; Lev. 20: 2, 10; cf. 1 Kings 21: 9-15).

b. 16: 44-52. JERUSALEM WAS WORSE THAN SAMARIA OR SODOM. The preceding theme is here continued and the city's sin is painted in still blacker colors. Asserting the influences of heredity—as was the mother so is the daughter (44)—and claiming a Hittite-Amorite ancestry for Jerusalem (45), to her eternal disgrace, the prophet concludes she is worse than either Samaria or Sodom (47). Such a comparison would be keenly felt. Samaria, or the north country, had lost her independence in 722, and later had suffered much at the hand of Assyria. Foreign groups introduced into the country (2 Kings 17: 24-26) had, in the eyes of Judah, added to her shame. Never very kindly disposed toward Samaria, her rival city, Jerusalem must have henceforth looked on her with contempt. Sodom, according to the current stories, had been utterly beyond the pale of decency (Gen. 19: 1-13). Hence the sting of the words of this sharp-tongued prophet.

daughters are dwelling north of you.
And your younger sister, dwelling south
of you is Sodom and her daughters.
47 And in their ways you have not walked,
nor have you done [40] according to
their abominations. (Like a little
only.) [41] But you have done more
corruptly than they in all your ways.
48 By my life, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh,
Sodom your sister, she and her
daughters have not done as you and
49 your daughters have done. Behold,
this was the iniquity of your sister
Sodom, pride, satiety from food, and
careless security belonged to her and
her daughters, and she did not better
the condition of the poor and needy.
50 But they were arrogant and did the
abominable thing before me, therefore
I removed them far off, even as you
51 have seen.[42] But Samaria did not
commit half your sins. For you multiplied
your abominations more than they,
and you have justified your sisters by
all your abominations that you have
52 done.[40] So now, bear your own
shame, while through your own sins, in
which you have acted more abominably
than they, you give judgment for your
sisters [43] that they are righteous [44]
in comparison to you. So now, be confounded
and bear your shame, while
you justify your sisters.[43]
53 And I will restore the fortune, the
fortune [45] of Sodom and her daughters,
and the fortune [45] of Samaria
and her daughters,[a] and I will
restore [46] your fortune in their
54 midst [a], [47] so that you may bear your
shame, and may be ashamed of all that
you have done, while you console them.
55 And your sisters, Sodom and her daughters,
shall return to their former estate,
and Samaria and her daughters shall return
to their former estate, [b] and you and
your daughters shall return to your former
56 estate. [b] Now your sister Sodom was
not to be mentioned by your lips in the
57 days [48] of your pride, before your
shame [49] was exposed, as at the

Samaria in much of the O. T. literature is recognized as one of the oldest Israelitish settlements. Jacob had experiences in this neighborhood, that seem to be rooted in history (Gen. 33: 18; 35: 40), and Joshua the Ephraimite is definitely associated with the immediate locality (Josh. 24). Shechem had been a holy place from early days, and no doubt Samaria had inherited her traditions and sanctity. Jerusalem only at a late period had become the center of Hebrew life. Sodom, strictly speaking, might be younger than the north country, but not younger than the south, if our sources are reliable. However, the author of bitter invective is not particularly interested in chronological sequences. That he should think of Sodom as closely related to Judah indicates a rather broad outlook racially. One is suspicious that the writer was not a very ardent Jew.

The sins attributed to Sodom differ widely from those in the Genesis narrative (18: 20; 19: 4-28). In verse 49 we hear the voice of a late prophet assailing pride, improper use of wealth and indifference to human needs. The earlier writer accused them of bestial behavior (Gen. 19: 4-28). Both are probably exponents of racial prejudice. The conclusion is that by any standard of justice, in the light of the abominations of Jerusalem both Samaria and Sodom would be justified, while Jerusalem would be confounded (51, 52). This is the refrain that is taken up by Jesus when he denounces Bethsaida and Chorazin (Matt. 11: 21).

c. 16: 53-63. Restoration Is Promised to the Three City-States, Samaria, Sodom, and Jerusalem, with their daughters—that is the outlying villages of each, in two brief oracles (53-58, 59-63).

Parts of the text have suffered grievously, and repetitions are to some evidence of interpolations. The tragedy of 586 lies in retrospect, along with the destruction of Sodom and the capture of Samaria. The Edomite invasion, which was not earlier than the 5th century B. C., seems to be an accomplished fact (56). It is thus evident that the Ezekiel of 592-586 is not speaking here.

Both oracles belong to that important

time [50] of the reproach of the daughters of Edom [51] and of all roundabout her, daughters of the Philistines, who
58 scorned you on every side. Your lewdness and your abominations you bear. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
59 (For) [52] Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, I will do [53] with you [54] even as you have done, in that you have despised the oath in breaking my covenant.[55]
60 Nevertheless, on my part, I will remember my covenant with you [54] in the days of your youth and I will establish
61 with you a covenant forever. Then you shall remember your ways and be ashamed when I take [56] your sisters,[39] the one older than you and the one younger than you, and give them to you as daughters, though not on account
62 of your covenant. Then I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall
63 know that I am Yahweh. So that you may remember and be ashamed and, because of your shame, never again open your mouth, when I have forgiven you all that you have done. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

body of messianic literature that furnished hope to struggling groups of Jews and Israelites, both in the homeland and abroad. In breadth of spirit there is something akin to Isa. 19: 24, 25. Most of this material comes from dark days in the post-exilic period, when release from an oppressive foreign bondage was urgent and only the power of Yahweh seemed adequate thereto. Long centuries of defeat that had quenched the national hopes had directed the confidence of the prophets toward the Lord himself. In this the important thing was Yahweh's election of his people, his covenant, and his forgiveness of them (63). Though all the world is unfaithful, the word of our God endures forever, is the theological refrain in this paragraph. Shame belongs to the inner rather than the outer life and indicates a disturbance or a dissatisfaction within the self. It is an expression of conscience at work, an evidence of repentance, and a sign of the humble and contrite heart. This idea, found in early literature (cf. Gen. 2: 25), finds its chief emphasis in the post-exilic period and is evidence of the penetrating insight into human values arrived at by a few of the writers of the Old Testament.

Chapter 17

6. 17: 1-24. AN ALLEGORY OF THE EAGLES AND THE CEDAR; Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. This chapter vividly presents and interprets crucial incidents in Judah's history.

a. 17: 1-15. The eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, took the cedar shoot, Jehoiachin, captive, and appointed Zedekiah king over Jerusalem (3-6). Zedekiah revolted and formed an alliance with Egypt, another great eagle (7, 8). The writer was aware of Jehoiachin's captivity and Zedekiah's rebellion, but knew nothing of the defeat of Egypt's army in 588 and the fall of Jerusalem in 586. The use of allegory, and phrases such as *rebellious house*, accredit this to Ezekiel in Jerusalem about 588. Vs. 9 is a gloss; 9a either disregards or improves on 10; and 9b is late eschatology.

b. 17: 16-21 gives another and different interpretation of the allegory. The judgment on Zedekiah is not for political intrigue (7-15), but for covenant-breaking (16, 18, 19, 20). Also history is more detailed. These two criticisms weigh against authenticity. But Ezekiel was probably more interested in the ethical side, in covenant-breaking, than he was in any political blunder. Also the historical references are vague, even inaccurate. Zedekiah was judged in Riblah and not in Babylonia (2 Kings 25: 6), which indicates that this section was written prior to 586.

c. 17: 22-24, the 3d section, is Messianic. There is a sharp distinction between Zedekiah and Jehoiachin, and the dry shoot—Jehoiachin (?)—is the hope of the kingdom and of the world. It is eschatological, and has a world outlook,

17:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, propound a
riddle and speak a parable to the house
3 of Israel and say, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, A great eagle, with broad
wings and wide-spreading pinions, full
of feathers, which were many colored,
came to Lebanon and took the topmost
4 branch of the cedar. The top of its
tender shoot he plucked off, and took it
to the land of traffic and set it up in
5 the land of traders. He took one of
the seed of the land and set it in a
fertile field and planted [1] it by abundant
waters and set it out as a marsh
6 plant so that it might sprout and become
[2] a spreading vine, low of
stature, that its branches might turn
toward him, and that its roots might be
under him. And it became a vine and
produced branches and sent out twigs.

7 Now there was another [3] great eagle,
broad of wing and fully feathered.
And lo! this vine turned [4] its
roots toward [5] him and sent out
its branches [6] to him from the terraces
where it was planted, so that he
8 might water it. In good soil, by [7]
abundant waters it was planted, that it
might produce branches and bear fruit
in order to be a noble vine.
9 Say, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Shall
it prosper? Surely, he shall tear up the
roots and cast off her fruit, that all its
tender roots may wither. (It shall
wither).[8] (And not by a strong arm
nor by many warriors in order to heave
10 it up by its roots).[9] Now behold,
being transplanted, shall it prosper?
Surely when the sirocco strikes it, it
shall wither completely. On the terrace
where it is growing it shall wither.

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but is not so far removed from the historical and from the phraseology of Ezekiel that it may not have come from his pen in the later years of his life.

a. 17:1-15. AN ALLEGORY, THE EAGLES AND THE CEDAR. This parable (1-10), the meaning of which must have been apparent to contemporaries, is carefully retailed, after the manner of Ezekiel in 11-15, and again in 16-21. For the modern reader a few explanations may be helpful. The great eagle (3, 12) was Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled in Babylonia from 605 to 562 B. C. He was the builder of the hanging gardens of Babylon the Great, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. In 597, because of rebellion, he besieged and captured Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:8-15); among the captives was Jehoiachin, the king, (2 Kings 24:10-16), spoken of here as the *tender shoot* which he took to the land of traffic and traders (4). Babylon with its congested centers and its world trade is thus happily described. Lebanon, famed for its cedars, lies to the north, and generally it designates the mountainous, wooded country north of Palestine. It may be used here for Jerusalem, because of the rare and expensive trimmings of cedar in palace and temple.

The *seed of the land* was Zedekiah, uncle of the captive king, whom Nebuchadnezzar made king or viceroy over Jerusalem (5, 13; 2 Kings 24:17, 18). The *fertile field* with abundant waters is the land of Judah. Thus Zedekiah was given every advantage possible to a petty tributary prince. He was expected to render allegiance to his lord, and was no doubt bound by an oath (13). Possibly *the strong of the land* were taken as hostages (13; cf. 2 Chron. 36:11). So long as he was loyal the province would prosper, but rebellion, while possible, would be folly.

However, due to the restlessness of petty neighboring tribes and the innate desire for independence—which ofttimes is unable to count the cost—and probably encouraged by Egypt, Zedekiah rebelled in 590 and then sought aid from Hophra, of Egypt, who ruled from 588 to 570. That is he *turned his roots toward* the second great eagle, Pharaoh Hophra (7, 15; Jer. 27:12-15; 37:5).

Can Zedekiah in rebelling and in making such an alliance prosper (10)? The answer is patent. Transplanting, the term used for the new allegiance, endangers the life of the vine. Forming an alliance with Egypt, always a broken reed that pierced the hand that leaned on it, was folly. Babylonia was ambitious, had

11 And the word of Yahweh came to me
12 as follows: Speak, I pray you, to the
rebellious house, Do you not know what
these things mean? Say, Behold the
king of Babylon came against Jerusalem
and took her king and her princes and
13 brought them to him to Babylon. Then
he took one of the royal seed and made
a covenant with him and made him
swear fealty to him, and removed the
14 strong ones of the land, in order to
weaken the kingdom so that it should
not rise in revolt, that is, that it should
continue [10] to observe his covenant.
15 But he rebelled against him, in sending
his messengers to Egypt to get for
himself horses and a numerous army.
Shall he succeed? Shall one doing these
things escape? When one breaks a covenant
shall he escape?
16 By my life, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh,
Surely in the abode of the king whose
oath he despised and whose covenant he
broke, in the midst of Babylon he shall
17 die. Neither with a mighty army nor
with a numerous company shall Pharaoh
aid him in war, when mounds are cast
up and forts are built in order to cut off
18 many people. For he despised the oath
by breaking the covenant and lo! he
pledged himself. Indeed he has done
all these things. He shall not escape.
19 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
By my life, surely, my oath that he has
despised and my covenant that he has
broken,[11] I will indeed bring it upon
20 his own head. And I will spread over
him my net and he shall be taken in
my snare and I will bring him to Babylon
and will enter into judgment with
him there, for he has been faithless
21 with me. So all his picked men [12] in
all his battalions, shall fall by the sword,
and those who are left shall be scattered
toward every wind. Then you shall
know that I, Yahweh, have spoken.

trained leadership, and abundant resources. Egypt was ruled by the upstart Hophra, beset by serious problems at home. Surely, as the prophet said, when the sirocco or the east wind, that is Babylon, strikes, the vine will be blasted (10).

b. 17: 16-21, REINTERPRET THE PARABLE with special emphasis on the violation of the covenant (16, 18, 19, 20). A covenant to the Hebrew prophet was more than a scrap of paper. The covenant, with impressive ritual, was made in the presence of deity. Often the contracting parties passed between the two parts of the sacrifice (Gen. 15: 16, 17; 26: 31; Jer. 37: 18, 19). Deity was there as a witness, and as a judge (Gen. 31: 49; Josh. 24: 27). Thus his honor as well as theirs was at stake. It is true that ancients—like moderns—sometimes suited their own convenience in the keeping of such arrangements. This was especially true in relation to foreigners and not a few of the unethical acts in the early O. T. may be understood in this light. Abraham and Sara plotted to deceive Pharaoh, but he was an Egyptian (Gen. 12: 10-20). Jacob bested Laban, but he was a Syrian (Gen. 30: 25-40). Many such acts were done and gloried in, because done to people of another race. The glory of the Hebrew people is that some of them were able to change, to grow, morally. The ethics of the earlier days were not lofty enough for later periods. The prophetic insistence that Yahweh was righteous and therefore demanded righteousness, fundamentally knew no racial bounds. Also, if he were righteous a covenant before him should be inviolable. He could not look on unrighteousness (Deut. 29: 25; Josh. 9: 15-21). Hence we are not surprised that Ezekiel, with growing interests in the right approach to Yahweh, should consider covenant-breaking one of the heinous sins. Death in Babylon—to a Jew an unclean land (4: 13)—would be one of the greatest calamities that could come to King Zedekiah. History, however, records tortures of which this writer knew nothing at the time of writing (cf. 2 Kings 25: 4-6, 18-21).

He pledged himself (18), in the Hebrew reads, he gave his hand, which was probably part of the ritual of the covenant (cf. Com. 20: 5; Ezra 10: 19; Prov. 6: 1; 17: 18; 22: 26; 1 Mac. 6: 58). What the exact form of the ceremony was we do not know. The raised

22 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, I also will take part of the topmost branch of the cedar, (the lofty and I will give) [13] from the top of the tender twigs. I will pluck off a tender one and I myself will transplant it on a high and
23 lofty mountain. On a high mountain of Israel I will transplant it, and it shall bring forth boughs and bear foliage, [14] and become a glorious cedar. All the birds of every kind shall dwell under it, in the shade of its branches they
24 shall lodge, and all the trees of the field shall know that I am Yahweh. I have brought down the lofty tree; I have exalted the low tree. I have dried up the green tree and have made the dry tree to bud. I am Yahweh, I have spoken, and I have acted.

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hand, the hand-shake, and many different hand grips, have all been used for fraternal or religious signs.

The net and the snare (20) used for catching birds and small animals are here employed poetically for capture (12: 13; 19:18; 32:3).

c. 17:22-24 ARE MESSIANIC AND LATER THAN THE EARLIER PART of the chapter (cf. above). A person, just as definite as Zedekiah, Hophra or Nebuchadnezzar, seems to stand before the writer. The *tender one* (22) the *low tree* and the *dry tree* (24) refer to some individual who is in marked contrast to the lofty tree and the green tree. As the hand fits the glove these descriptions fit Jeconiah, the ex-king of Judah, who was languishing in captivity in Babylon; or less perfectly some descendant of his (2 Kings 24:12-15). The scion of David in exile became the hope of Israel after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. (21: 27). This tender one was an integral part of the first captivity, who were the flower of the land (2 Kings 24:14; Jer. 24:4-8). It is evident that following the catastrophe of 586 many looked to the captives for the rehabilitation of the fortunes of Israel (11:17, 22, 23; 9:8, 9; 14:21-23; cf. Jer. 24:1-10). These were part of the topmost branch, of the cedar, and transplanted to Palestine would become the nucleus of a great kingdom. These verses, like a number of other sections, are an apologetic for the captives in Babylon.

The high mountain of Israel, in contrast to the low lands of Babylon, is an exilic and post-exilic phrase (40:2; Isa. 2:1-4; Micah 4:2-5).

The universal and beneficent character of the kingdom is a frequent motif in Messianic literature. Birds of every kind lodge in the shade of the branches of the shoot that has developed so marvelously (23). That is, peoples and nations are to be blessed in the blessings of Israel. They shall know that Yahweh is God. This assures all of the highest good (cf. Isa. 56:6-8; 60:1, 2). It is a lovely vision, ofttimes reiterated, but still a long way off.

Chapter 18

7. 18:1-32. THE DOCTRINE OF INDIVIDUALISM OR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY. Individualism is the theme of this chapter. The thesis stated 1-4. Analysis and argumentation 5-25. General summary—which seems like an insertion—26-29. Repentance of the individual is the way of life for the house of Israel 30-32.

This subject, often couched in identical phraseology, is a favorite one with Ezekiel (cf. 3:16-21; 14:12-23; 33:10-20). Here it is presented in the most thoroughgoing form and is the classic expression of the dogma of individualism. Whether this was written earlier or later than the other similar passages can never be more than the theory of a dilettante. But all evidences would converge toward Ezekiel's authorship, sometime after the uprooting of the social and national life of Jerusalem in 586. It is prose, very poor at that, but is in the style of Ezekiel, who like many moderns sometimes fell below his high level. Hölscher's

18:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: What do you mean by reciting
this proverb in the land of Israel,
saying, The fathers have eaten [1] sour
grapes and the children's teeth are set
3 on edge. By my life, Oracle of (Lord)
Yahweh, Never again (to you) [2] shall
4 one recite this proverb in Israel. Behold
all men are responsible to me. As
is the father, so is the son before me.
5 The one who sins he dies. Now, if
any man be just and if he practise
6 justice and righteousness, and does not eat
with the blood,[3] nor lift up his eyes
to the filthy images of the house of
Israel, nor defile the wife of his neighbor,
nor approach,[4] a woman in her
7 impurity, nor wrong any man, restores
his pledged article,[5] takes no plunder,
gives his bread to the hungry and clothes
8 the naked, lends not at usury, nor
takes increase, holds back his hand from
iniquity, executes true judgment among
9 men, walks in my statutes, and observes

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argument against its authenticity, on the ground that it is not a threat against idolatrous Jerusalem, but a call to the exiles to repent, is scarcely cogent (Hölscher, 104). Its individualism is allied to the prophet's call to be a watchman (3:17), and here it is correlated with the teaching of the *new heart* (cf. 18:31; 36:25, 26). Nevertheless it has a marked interest in ritual and leans strongly toward theory. It may have been written in Jerusalem shortly after 586, but there are no infallible signs.

Individualism as a doctrine was revolutionary. Its development had been slow. In early history the tribe had been the essential unit and the individual had existed chiefly as identified in the group. Father and son stood or fell together. The law was tribal; the sins of the fathers were visited on the children to the 3d and 4th generation (Exod. 20:5). In this principle of solidarity was safety; and in tribal society, rugged individualism had to be limited.

Only slowly did the idea of the worth of the individual emerge. At all periods some men stood apart from the throng. The hero in battle (1 Sam. 14:45; 17:31-54), the judge of unfailing wisdom (2 Sam. 16:23), the innovator in social and religious affairs (1 Kings 4:26; 6:2), all aided in raising the individual above the mob. The priest and the judge had always to take individual cases into consideration, and by the beginning of the 9th century, in at least one case, the children of the murderers were not put to death as had been the earlier custom (cf. 2 Kings 14:6); by the 7th century this was written into the legislation (Deut. 24:16). The old theory expressed in the proverb, "the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge," in 586 became the apologetic of the people. The fall of the city was due to the sins of the fathers. Thus by an old theory they shouldered their personal responsibility off their ancestry.

Jeremiah had repudiated this interpretation of the law of heredity (Jer. 31:29), and had indicted his own generation for choosing the iniquities of their fathers (Jer. 11:9-12). He singled out the leaders of the day as peculiarly guilty (Jer. 23:1, 2, 30-32), and condemned the kings of Judah by name (Jer. 22:1-5, 11, 12, 18, 24-30).

18:5-20. Ezekiel carried the idea to its ultimate conclusion. Surely, a good man should live (5-9), and should his son be evil, he should surely die (10-13), while the good son of a wicked father should surely live (14-18). A summary is added in vss. 19, 20. The immediately preceding rulers, Josiah the good (5-9), Jehoiachim the evil (10-13), Jeconiah the good (14-18), and Zedekiah the evil, need not be considered patterns for this argument.

18:21-29, in which 26-29, a parallel to 21-25—which adds nothing—is a development of the above idea. A man is condemned or justified, not by the activities of a lifetime, but by the deed of a moment. If a wicked man repents he lives, while a good man who sins dies. This,

my judgments to do them,[6] he is
righteous. Surely he should live.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
10 But should he beget a son, a violent
one, a shedder of blood, (and a brother
11 has done from one from these) [7] and
he has done all of these things, for
indeed he has eaten with the blood, and
12 he has defiled his neighbor's wife, the
poor and needy he has wronged, plunder
he has taken, the pledge he has not
returned, and he has lifted up his eyes to
the filthy images, has committed an
13 abomination, has given for usury, and
takes increase, (and he lives) [8] he
should not live. He has committed all
these abominations, he should certainly
die.[9] His blood should be upon
himself.
14 And further, should he beget a son
who should see all the sins his father
committed, and should he fear and not
15 do likewise, should he not eat with the
blood,[3] nor lift up his eyes to the
filthy images of the house of Israel, nor
16 defile his neighbor's wife, nor wrong
any man, exact no pledge, take no
plunder, give his bread to the hungry,
17 and clothe the naked, hold back his
hand from iniquity,[10] take no usury
or increase, perform my judgments, walk
in my statutes, he should not die
because of his father's iniquity. Surely
18 he should live. His father, because he
practised oppression, carried on robbery
(brother) [11] and did that which was
not right among my people,[12] behold
he died for his iniquity.

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a summary of this section, is atomism. According to this—interpreted literally—not only is each individual a separate entity in the stream of life, but each moment in the individual life is divorced from all that precedes. Such an extreme form of statement was the Oriental method of attracting attention to a fact, personal responsibility, that was generally disregarded.

All this, however, must be read in the light of vss. 30-32, a call to repentance with the assurance that Yahweh has no pleasure in the death of any (32, 33). The apparent purpose of this is to comfort the people, distraught because of the fall of the city. The disaster was caused by their own sins, not the sins of their ancestors, and their salvation will be achieved when they repent. The new heart will bring in a new order.

18:1-4. THE PROVERB, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes," has in it a very important truth, namely, the influences of heredity. The biologist assures us that certain qualities are carried forward not simply to the third and fourth generation but are permanent factors in life. Children suffer because of sins of the fathers.

But that is not the whole truth. Free will and personal responsibility are the other side of the picture. In Jerusalem at this time there were those who laid all the blame for the captivity and the ruin of the city on the ancestors, thus excusing themselves from any effort toward rehabilitation. The prophet insisted in a most vigorous fashion that each individual was responsible for failure and for success. Death and life were in the power of each. Thus the providences of God were just and equitable. Here we have the prophetic emphasis on personal responsibility and on the justice of God, stated in bold terms, without any "ifs" and "buts" to lessen its impact on the minds of the hearers. It is the one-sided expression given to a new or neglected idea so that it may gain consideration from a dull-witted public. It proclaims emphatically the worth of the individual. Such teaching is found in Confucius, Plato and other early philosophers, but nowhere is individual responsibility expressed more clearly than here. A new day dawned for mankind when this doctrine was enunciated. Nation, race and class must bow before it. Each individual has inalienable rights and responsibilities.

The meaning of the terms, *life* and *death* as used in this chapter, needs consideration. A number of scholars are convinced that as used they have an eschatological significance; that is, they

19 But you think, why should not the
son bear the iniquity of the father? But
surely the son, who executes justice and
righteousness, who observes and does
all my statutes, surely he should live.
20 The individual sinner he, himself, should
die. The son should not bear the iniquities
of the father, nor should the
father bear the iniquities of the son.
The righteousness of the righteous man
should be for himself, and the wickedness
of the wicked should be on himself.
21 Again, the wicked man, should he
turn from all his sin that he has committed,
and observe all my statutes, and
practise justice and righteousness, surely
22 he should live and not die. None of his
transgressions that he did should be remembered
against him. On account of
his righteousness that he has done, he
23 should live. Do I in any way take
pleasure in the death [13] of the
wicked? Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
Assuredly when he turns from his way
he shall live.
24 Again, if the righteous man turn from
his righteousness, and do iniquity according
to all the abominations that the
wicked has done, (he will do and
live) [14] all his righteousness that he
has done should not be remembered.
Because of his treachery whereby he
has been faithless, and his sins whereby
he has sinned, he should die.
25 But you say the way of the Lord is
not equitable. Listen, I pray you, O
house of Israel, Is my way not equitable?
Most certainly your ways are not
26 equitable. If a righteous man turn from
his righteousness and does iniquity,
(and he die upon them) [15] because
of his iniquity that he has done, he

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refer to physical death and to the life beyond (Hölscher 96, Hermann 113, 114). But this does not seem probable. The usual language of eschatology is entirely absent from the chapter, and vss. 21-29 would fit in poorly with such an idea. Probably Ezekiel did not go beyond the popular conception as found in the speeches of the friends of Job (cf. Job 5: 5, 15, 16, 17; 8: 5-7; 11: 13-19). Both words are intensive. Life carries with it the joy and thrill of living in the favor of God, while death signifies the opposite. It implies the listlessness of debility, the weariness of disillusionment, the loneliness of the outcast. Death is that dull, drab life that is out of favor with man and God. Ezekiel's call to all to turn and repent, and make a new heart—for Yahweh is merciful—does not go beyond realities of life in this world.

18: 5-9. RULES FOR RIGHT CONDUCT. These verses have been termed a priestly catechism in which there are twelve rules. They are chiefly ritualistic. To eat anything with the blood was forbidden by the earliest legislation (Lev. 19: 26; cf. 1 Sam. 14: 23; Isa. 65: 4; Ezek. 4: 14), for blood was sacred to deity (Exod. 20: 14; Deut. 22: 22). The fact that blood was mysteriously related to life may have been at the root of this prohibition and it is unlikely that such legislation originated in health considerations. Laws against idolatry and adultery are found in all the codes. Contact with a woman in her impurity was likewise taboo (Exod. 20: 14; Deut. 5: 17; Lev. 15: 24; 18: 19). Oppression was always opposed by law and prophet (Exod. 20: 20; Deut. 23: 17; Lev. 19: 33), and the pledged garment must be restored by nightfall (Exod. 22: 25; Deut. 24: 12; Amos 2: 8), while care for the hungry, the naked, and the poor was incumbent on all. Usury was banned. This, in part, was due to the fact that until the exile, Israel carried on only petty business, and money was borrowed largely to provide sustenance, not for business purposes.

18: 10-13 presents the reverse scene and judges as worthy of death the man who does these things.

18: 14-20 plays the changes on the same theme.

18: 21-29. EACH ACT IS JUDGED. This emphasizes the fact that each day a man may determine his conduct for good or evil, and he is thus judged by his daily deeds. He has thus an opportunity to turn from his evil way and live. This is that in which Yahweh is interested; this

27 should die. On the other hand, if a wicked man turn from his wickedness that he has done and does justice and righteousness, he himself should live.
28 If he consider and turn from all his transgressions which he has committed,
29 surely he should live and not die. Yet the house of Israel says the way of the Lord is not equitable. Is my way [16] not equitable, O house of Israel? Most certainly your ways are not equitable.
30 Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you each one according to his own ways. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh. Turn, yes turn back from all your transgression and you will have no stumbling
31 block of iniquity. Put away from you all your transgressions, whereby you have transgressed and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit, for why should you die, O house of Israel?
32 For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh. Therefor return and live.

19:1 Now, you, yourself, take up a dirge
Over the prince [1] of Israel.

2 What a lioness was your mother!
In the midst[2] of the lions
She crouched, among the young lions
She reared her lion-whelps.

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is the evangel to struggling, depressed humanity. With every dawn there comes a new opportunity. Of course, the other side, in which the preacher is not interested here, is that all our yesterdays go into the life of today, to curse or bless it.

Herein are the ways of the Lord equitable. The Hebrew might be translated, my ways are according to the standard of measurement. It was the belief of the prophet that the universe at heart was ethically sound.

18:30-32. A CALL TO REPENTANCE addressed to the house of Israel. A good man will live, but an evil man can escape doom only by turning from his evil and making for himself a new heart (cf. 9:19; 36:26; Jer. 31:34). This, which lays emphasis on the inner life, need not be divorced from the outer acts, but should be the inspiring source of righteous conduct.

Chapter 19

8. 19:1-14. AN ALLEGORY; A DIRGE OVER JUDAH AND HER KINGS. Allegory, much used by Ezekiel, is again the vehicle of his message. The fate of Judah under three of her kings, Jehoahaz, 3, 4, Jehoiachin, 5-9, each under the symbol of a lion, and Zedekiah 10-14, under the symbol of a vine, is bewailed. The two sections 3-9, and 10-14, combine to form one picture. These 2 symbols are side by side in Gen. 49:8-12, in which this chapter is rooted. It is true that vss. 10-14 do not run smoothly, but this seems scarcely adequate reason for different authorship. Nor is the date of composition problematic. The dirge over Zedekiah in 10-14, with a possible reference to the Gedaliah-Ishmael episode of 586, is history. Laments, unless entirely artificial, are usually composed in the presence of the sorrow memorialized. This wail has the warmth of immediate experience. So we are not far astray if we consider 586, the time of writing, and Jerusalem, or the hillsides of Judah, as the place where these laments for the passing of the house of David were first heard.

The superscription, vs. 1, and the subscription, vs. 14d, come from the hand of an editor, Ezekiel or other. The 2d clause of vs. 9 may also be an historical annotation by a scribe.

19:1, 2. A DOUBLE INTRODUCTION, vs. 1 being related to 10-14, while vs. 2 is an introduction to the three laments. Dirge, or lamentation, is one of the common Hebrew rhythms used for expression of sorrow, such as the funeral wail, or on occasions of national disaster. As here, it prevailingly had a 5 measure line, 3 beats, followed by 2. The effect of the monotonous repetition of this, 3-2, 3-2 movement produces as well as expresses the mood of sorrow. The plaintive note

3 She brought up one of her whelps,
A young lion he was!
And he learned to seize prey.
Mankind he devoured.

4 Against [3] him the nations raised a cry.[4]
In their pit he was taken.
They led him away with hooks
To the land of Egypt.

5 When she saw that he was removed,[5]
Her hope perished.
Then she took another [6] of her whelps.
She made him a young lion.

6 And he roamed about with the lions.
A young lion he was!
And he learned to seize prey.
Mankind he devoured.

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is felt throughout the chapter, even though the textual corruptions and the difficulties of translation combine to obscure it. Thought is wedded to form.

Prince, is Ezekiel's term for Zedekiah, who, though ruler of Judah, could scarcely be called king of Israel (cf. 7: 26; 12: 12; 21: 30). Thus it is apparent that it is the superscription not of the whole chapter, but of vss. 10-14. An editor may have dislocated it from its original place.

The mother lioness, vs. 2, is Judah, not Hamutal the wife of Josiah and mother of Jehoahaz and Zedekiah (2 Kings 23: 31; 24: 18). As queen mother she had played an important part in the politics of the day. She bore the title, great lady (Jer. 13: 18; 29: 2), and may have had something to do with the strange order of succession to the throne during this period. Jehoahaz superseded the older brother in 608 (2 Kings 23: 31-34) and in 597 the throne reverted from the older line to Zedekiah her youngest son (2 Kings 24: 17, 18). But while there is no inherent reason why the queen mother should not personify the country, as is so vigorously argued by Hermann (114), the evidence precludes such interpretation. Both symbols, the lioness and the vine, have the same party in mind. Both are found united in Gen. 49: 8-12, where they clearly represent Judah. Further, Hamutal was not the mother of Jehoiachin, one of the kings, and even the kings, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah are swallowed up in the nation. They are but symbols of the glory that will soon become only a memory.

The lioness, Judah, is pictured in the allegory as the peer of the neighboring nations (2), and her kings as the equals of others. This betrays the vision of the patriot rather than the judgment of the historian.

19: 3, 4. THE LIFE STORY OF KING JEHOAHAZ. He reigned 3 months in Jerusalem and was deposed by Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt in 608 (cf. 2 Kings 23: 32-34). Here poetic license ascribed to him the usual kingly rôle. Concerning his gifts and achievements during his brief régime we know nothing. His end was that of so many of the petty princes of Palestine. The poetry of the text, they led him away with hooks to the land of Egypt, may be a literal description of his fate, as other princes actually suffered this indignity. Ancient monuments picture the captive kings hooked by lips or jaws and led in triumph at the chariot wheels of the victor. Modern war-lords may have the lust of conquest, but scarce one would dare flaunt such atrocities in the face of the nations.

19: 5-9. JEHOIACHIN AND HIS FATE is usually considered the theme of this dirge. He ruled in Jerusalem in 597, for a period of 3 months, and was carried to Babylon with the 1st captivity under Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24: 8-16). Here he remained as a royal prisoner until the accession of Evil-merodach to the throne of Babylonia in 561 (2 Kings 25: 27), when he was released and given certain privileges in Babylon.

It seems strange that no reference is made to his predecessor Jehoiachim, who reigned from 608 to 597. True, he had

7 He broke down [7] their palaces.[8]
Their cities he destroyed.
The land and all therein was dismayed
At the sound of his roaring.

8 Then the nations camped [9] around him,
From the provinces round about.
And over him they cast their net;
In their pit he was taken.

9 And with hooks they put him in a cage,
(And they brought him to the king of Babylon) [10]
And they brought him to the strongholds
That his voice should not be heard
On [3] the mountain tops of Israel.

10 Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard,[11]
Transplanted by the waters.
She was fruitful and full of branches
Because of abundant water.

11 And she had a rugged branch [12]
For a scepter [13] of dominion.
And its stature reached aloft
Up among the clouds,
And could be seen in its height,
With a multitude of boughs.

12 But in wrath it was plucked up;
To the earth it was hurled down;
And an east wind dried it up;
Its fruit in its beauty;[14]
And its rugged branch was withered;
A fire burnt it up.

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been a vassal, first of Egypt and then of Babylonia, and had finally led an insurrection that had cost him his throne (2 Kings 23:34–24:7). But no good reason can be assigned for this omission; neither that the prophet had interest only in captive kings, nor that he had no interest in a king of Judah appointed by a foreign potentate, carries conviction. In fact the suspicion grows that in the scribal process something has been lost or excised, and vs. 7 corresponds very closely to Jeremiah's denunciation of him (cf. Jer. 22:13-17). If *nations* and *provinces* of vs. 8 have any definite significance they must reflect the experiences of Judah in 601 to 598, which resulted from the rebellion of Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:1-3). However, there is no possibility of ever knowing just what may have been the original lament.

Jehoiachin, so far as we know, did nothing, in fact he could do nothing, spectacular during his reign of 3 months. That he was a captive in Babylonia for some 30 years seems certain (2 Kings 25:27). Evidences show that Ezekiel long considered him the true king of Judah and hoped that through him the kingdom would finally be reestablished (cf. 17:22-24). His contemporary, Jeremiah, had a good opinion of him (Jer. 22:24).

The text of vs. 7a is so corrupt that restoration is uncertain. Another reading, with but slight emendations that follow Hitzig and Ehrlich, has much to commend it. It reads:

> He brought the booty to his lair,
> Their thickets he destroyed.

This is consistent with the figure of the lion, while the usual rendering makes no sense.

19:10-14. A DIRGE OVER JUDAH UNDER KING ZEDEKIAH. The dominating idea is Judah, your mother. While it differs from the foregoing, not only in symbol but also in literary quality, it is scarcely the senseless muddle that some have asserted. It is not a literary classic, but even Homer nods. It finds its coordination with the previous laments in Gen. 49:8-12, where lion and vine both symbolize the nation. These symbols were so usual for Judah that we need not be surprised at the turn from one to the other.

Transplanted (10) suggests that they were living under a foreign power, while abundant water was the sign of great prosperity. The rugged branch, (11) Zedekiah, was the cynosure of all eyes, which was close to the truth. Judah, from 597 to 586, as so frequently in his-

13 And now in the desert it is transplanted,
In a land that is dry and thirsty.

14 Fire has gone forth from its branch;
It has devoured its (*fruit and*) [15] boughs.
Now it has no rugged branch,
No scepter of dominion.

This is a dirge. Indeed it has become a dirge.

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tory, was a pivot around which revolved the destiny of nations. The rugged branch reached aloft, up among the clouds, or became proud and vain-glorious (cf. Ezek. 16: 49, 50, 56). Because of this it was destroyed by Babylon (12, cf. Ezek. 17: 9, 10).

The figure is changed in vs. 13. The vine is transplanted to the desert, which means complete destruction. The last verse looks like a reference to Ishmael's murder of Gedaliah and the Babylonian guard at Mizpah (cf. 2 Kings 25: 23-26; Jer. 40: 7–41: 15); fire going forth from its branch, devouring its fruit and boughs, reads like a reflection of this utterly futile, almost insane act on the part of a petty scion of the house of Judah. So it had no rugged branch left, no scepter of dominion. Such was the end.

DIVISION I. SECTION (e). 20:1—24:27

DESTRUCTION IS UNAVOIDABLE

Chapter 20

20: 1-44. There are 2 main divisions in this chapter. The 1st, 1-32, presents the religious history of Israel and concludes that punishment was inescapable. The elders came to inquire of Yahweh (1-4), but rebellion and idolatry made it impossible for Yahweh to respond (4, 31). In Egypt the Israelites had been idolaters (5-9); in the wilderness the 1st generation rebelled (10-17); likewise the 2d (18-26); in Canaan they were Baal worshipers (27-29), and the contemporary generation followed the ways of their fathers (30, 31). So Yahweh cannot listen to their petition. Vs. 32 suggests that some were planning a wilful apostasy.

The date given in 1a belongs to the general chronological scheme and stands apart from the message (cf. Introd. xiv, xv). Vss. 2-31 form a unit, with few corruptions of text and probably no interpolations. Vs. 32 is a natural appendix. The whole section is prose, with a good deal of wearying repetition, but in phrase and idea it is quite similar to chap. 16 and 23. The authenticity of vss. 27-29 and 32 has been questioned by Hölscher and others. But they do not seem foreign to the prophet. Even the pun in vs. 29b may have come from the pen of Ezekiel, who loved symbols, parables and allegories. The whole is an orderly summary of Israel's idolatry, given as the reason for Yahweh's refusal to listen to her appeals for deliverance. Like those messages that deal with punishment, it can be assigned to the closing days of the kingdom in 586, and the city of Jerusalem is a suitable center for its composition.

The 2d division, 33-44, dreams of the restoration of Israel. Here there is some confusion. Phrases from Deuteronomy, and ideas similar to those in Holiness Code are found along with echoes from other literature in such a way as to suggest a mosaic. Yet it is not altogether lacking in forceful utterance. Yahweh as king (33), purging out the rebels (36), the irony in vs. 39, and passing the people under the rod (37), remove it from the altogether trivial. It belongs to the literature of reconstruction. The captivity and the dispersion of 586 are presupposed. The exiles are scattered in various groups in different countries. Among some of these are rebels who must be excluded (36), ritual observances were being valued and correlated as an offset to earlier pagan idolatry. In a period of

20:1 And it came to pass in the seventh
year, in the fifth month, on the tenth of
the month, that certain of the elders of
Israel came to inquire of Yahweh and
2 they sat before me. Then the word of
3 Yahweh came to [1] me as follows: Mortal
man, speak to the elders of Israel and
say to them, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Is
it to inquire of me that you have come?
By my life I will not be inquired of by
4 you. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh. Will
you judge them? O mortal man, will
you act as judge? Cause them to understand
the abominations of their fathers.
5 So say to them, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh. In the day when I chose Israel,
and pledged myself to the descendants
of the house of Jacob, and made
myself known to them in the land of
Egypt, then I pledged myself to them as
6 follows: I am Yahweh your God. In
that day I pledged myself to them, that
I would bring them out of the land of
Egypt to a land that I had given [2]
them, a land [3] flowing with milk and
honey, it is the most glorious of all
7 countries. And I said to them, Throw
away, every one, the abominations of his

ferment all this reconstruction would require but a decade or two. It fits in reasonably well with Ezekiel's dreams of a rehabilitated Israel as found in 14:21-23; 17:22-24; 18:30-32; 34:23; 36:26; 37:24, and is supplementary to 20:1-32. It may belong to the later years of the prophet, and may be a basis for still later priestly dreams. As for the place of its origin, there are no conclusive signs. The attack on Canaanitish worship, the reference to the sweet smoke of incense, and my mountain, might favor Palestine; but the rebels and the wilderness of the peoples, might betray some other habitat.

20:1-4. THE ELDERS VISIT THE PROPHET. The date in 1a would give us August, 591 (cf. Introd. xiii). The elders of Israel are mentioned in 14:3, where we find the same problem and the same answer in much the same language (cf. Com. 14:3-11). Will you judge them? is again found in 22:2 and 23:36. The question suggests that while the prophet believes in the absoluteness of Deity, he likewise believes that God is in the affairs of men and operates through men. There is a further implication that Yahweh would not hesitate to leave the judgment of his people in the hands of the prophet. This is very realistic, for the fact is, that the judgment of the best men must be closely akin to that of God himself. Indeed, it frequently happens that a good man identifies his own thinking with that of Deity.

20:5-9. IN EGYPT ISRAEL WAS IDOLATROUS. When *I chose* Israel, gives the point of view of the whole chapter, and is an essential note in the theology of Ezekiel. The word for "choose" is used frequently in Deuteronomy (cf. 4:37; 7:7; 10:15; 14:2) and by most post-exilic writers. But the earlier writers, when speaking of Yahweh's relation to Israel, use the word "to know," which has more of the intimate and personal relationship and less of the absolute or arbitrary. Ezekiel has a flavoring of the priestly in much of his writing. Pledged myself, is literally "I lifted up my hand." This was one of the early signs used for taking an oath. The original significance is not certain, but the hand itself may have been pledged as a guarantee of the fulfilment of the covenant. The uplifted hand is still used as a sign of an oath (cf. 17:18).

Ezekiel considers that the covenant between Yahweh and Israel goes back only as far as Moses and Egypt (cf. 16:3; 20:23, 24; 23:8). This rests on Exod. 3:10-15, from which comes the slogan, I am Yahweh your God (Exod. 3:14), and is based on the northern tradition.

The land of Egypt includes the Sinaitic peninsula as far east as a line drawn from a few miles south of Gaza to Akaba on the Red Sea. Here it probably refers only in a general way to the Egypt of the exodus experiences. It is assumed that preceding the exodus there was a covenant between Moses and Yahweh. While

eyes, and do not pollute yourselves with
the filthy images of Egypt, I am Yahweh
8 your God. However, they rebelled
against me and were unwilling to listen
to me. No one threw away the abominations
of their eyes, nor did they forsake
the filthy images of Egypt. So I
planned to pour out my wrath on them
in order fully to assuage my anger
9 against them in the land of Egypt. But
I acted for the sake of my name, so that
it should not be profaned in the eyes
of the nations, among whom they were,
in whose eyes I made myself known
in bringing them out of the land of
Egypt.

10 So I brought them out of the land of
Egypt, and I brought them into the
11 wilderness, and I gave them my statutes
and my judgments, which if a man
practise, through them he shall indeed
12 live. And also my sabbaths I gave to
them to be a sign between me and their
sons, so that they might know that I am
Yahweh, who sanctifies them.

13 But the house of Israel rebelled
against me in the wilderness. They did
not walk in my statutes, and my judgments,
which if a man practise, by them
he shall live, they rejected; and my
sabbaths they greatly profaned. So I
planned to pour out my wrath on them,
14 to consume them in the wilderness. But
I acted because of my name, so that it
should not be profaned in the eyes of
the nations, in whose sight I brought

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the call of Moses and the deliverance of Israel from bondage were important as initial events, we usually think of the experiences at Sinai as crucial, and central in the covenant. It is possible that Ezekiel has telescoped some of his history.

A land flowing with milk and honey (cf. 3:3; 16:13, 19) is the Bedouin description of pasture land that is better than the desert; and such was Palestine. The most glorious of all countries (cf. Jer. 3:19; Dan. 8:9; 11:16), expresses appreciation of the beauty of the country and the rich experiences the people had in the land, rather than its productivity.

Yahweh commanded his people to cease worshiping the idols of Egypt (7, 8), but this they failed to do (cf. 16:26; 23:3; Josh. 24:14; Lev. 18:3), and hence are accused of being rebellious from the beginning (cf. chap. 16 and 23). From other sources we know little of such idolatry, and though Egypt influenced Israel greatly, most of this was from the days of the kingdom and later.

Rebellion led to destruction, but the well-merited annihilation of Israel Yahweh could not permit, for the sake of his name (9, 13, 22; cf. 36:22, 32). *The name,* in early thought was considered an essential part of the individual. To know a person's name was to have some sort of control over him. Jacob wanted to know the name of the midnight wrestler, for therein lay power (Gen. 32:27-29). Moses must know the name of the Deity who commissioned him, otherwise he could not go before his people (Exod. 3:13). When, under the teaching of the prophets, the concept of Yahweh became thoroughly ethical, then the name of God became equivalent to his character or honor. A fair interpretation of all these passages would be, for the sake of Yahweh's honor. In pre-exilic days the phrase is rarely used. We find it occasionally in Deuteronomy and in Jeremiah (Deut. 9:28, 29; Jer. 14:7, 21), but more frequently in Ezekiel and in later literature. It has a theological quality, and insists that the character of Yahweh must not be sullied, come what may. Even though his chosen people were quite unworthy, nevertheless they must be saved in order to save the face of Yahweh. It is to be feared that theology in its effort to exalt the majesty of God has sometimes failed to do full justice to his ethical nature.

20:10-17. THE FIRST GENERATION OF ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS was rebellious. Statutes and judgments are words characteristic of Deuteronomy. Sabbaths, the plural form, is found in Holiness Code, Leviticus 17-26, in Ezekiel and in the Priestly Code. In the post-exilic period the observance of the Sabbath assumed an importance not known in

15 them out. Further, I pledged myself to
them in the wilderness, that I would not
bring them into the land that I had
given them,[4] a land [3] flowing with
milk and honey, it is the most glorious
16 of all countries, because they rejected
my judgments and did not practise my
statutes, and profaned my sabbaths, for
their heart went after their filthy im-
17 ages. Yet my eye pitied them, and I
did not destroy them, nor did I com-
pletely do away with them in the desert.

18 Also I said to their children in the
wilderness, Do not walk in the statutes
of your fathers, nor observe their cus-
toms, nor profane yourselves with their
19 filthy images, I am Yahweh your God.
Walk in my statutes, and observe and
20 do my judgments, and sanctify my sab-
baths, and let them be a sign between
me and your sons, that you may know
21 that I am Yahweh your God. But the
sons rebelled against me. In my statutes
they did not walk, and my judgments

the earlier days. As a day of rest it could play no very important part in the life of a nomadic people. In the agricultural life in Canaan cessation from labor had little significance. But for both groups worship, in which the moon occupied an important place, was central. Not only was the moon in its varying phases one of the most arresting sights on the horizon, but for both shepherd and farmer it controlled many activities. It was designed to rule the night. So important was the new moon that a feast was long observed in its honor (1 Sam. 20: 5; 2 Kings 4: 23; Amos 8: 5; Hos. 2: 13), and throughout all history, it has been the basis of our months and years. It is also a fair hypothesis that the week was in early days related to its four phases, and that thus the month was divided up into periods of seven days each. However, it was in the exilic and post-exilic periods that the Sabbath assumed its supreme religious significance. Henceforth it became a sign, and its observance was considered essential to true religion. Following the catastrophe of 586, worship at the temple was impossible. Hence by way of compensation, circumcision, study of the law, and Sabbath observance, which could be practised anywhere, received a new emphasis. In this Ezekiel may have pointed the way. As the centuries passed, the Sabbath grew in importance and consecrated to itself much ancient history (cf. Deut. 5: 15; Exod. 20: 11; Gen. 2: 2-4; Exod. 31: 17). Later still Jesus and Paul had to stem the current of priestcraft and declare that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2: 27; Col. 2: 16).

Through them he shall live asserts that obedience to the statutes and judgments secures life. This is the speech and the doctrine of Deuteronomy (Deut. 4: 20, 40; 5: 10; 30: 16), which Ezekiel expresses in detail in chap. 18 (cf. Com. 18: 1-4, 9, 13).

20: 18-26. THE SECOND GENERATION was as faithless as the first. For the honor of his name among the nations he did not blot them out, but he threatened to disperse them among the nations. Here again, in his repeated mercy, God is very merciful.

I gave you statutes that were not good (25) is a positive statement, not an interrogation under the influence of Aramaic, and is part of the theology of Ezekiel and his contemporaries. Yahweh was sovereign and dealt with his people as he deemed best. His purposes were inscrutable, hence could not be questioned. As he was sovereign, his ways must be equitable (18: 25, 29) and his rule absolute. He must be responsible alike for what men called the good and what they called the evil (cf. 1 Kings 22: 19-23; Ezek. 14: 9; Jer. 20: 7; Isa. 45: 7).

Statutes that were not good are easily located. That of child sacrifice (cf. 16: 20), an ancient practice, was probably one of them. In the oldest Hebrew code we find the demand, the first-born of thy sons shalt thou give to me (Exod. 22: 29; 34: 20), which preserves the primitive fact. Child sacrifice, however, though practised widely, had long been outgrown

they did not observe to do them, which if a man practise, through them he shall indeed live, and they profaned my sabbaths. So I planned to pour out my wrath on them in order to fully assuage my anger against them in the desert.
22 However, I held back my hand and I acted because of my name, not to profane it before the eyes of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.
23 Also I pledged myself to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them
24 among the countries, because they had not practised my judgments, and my statutes they had rejected, also my sabbaths they had profaned, and their eyes had gone after the filthy images of their
25 fathers. Then I gave them statutes that were not good and judgments by means
26 of which they could not live. And I polluted them by means of their own gifts, through causing all their firstborn to pass through the fire that I might make them desolate, so that they might know that I am Yahweh.

27 Therefore speak to the house of Israel, O mortal man, and say to them, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Even in this [5] did your fathers blaspheme me when they acted faithlessly with me.
28 When I brought them into the land which I had pledged myself to give them, on every high hill and by every green tree that they saw, there they offered their sacrifices, and there they made (the vexation of their gifts they also placed there) [6] the sweet smoke of their incense and poured out their
29 libations. So I said to them, What means the high place where you go in? And its name to this day is *go in*.

30 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Do you defile yourselves after the manner of your fathers, and after their detestable
31 things are you playing the harlot, and are you defiling yourselves by offering your gifts and causing your sons to pass through the fire to all your filthy images, even to this day? And shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? By my life, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh,
32 I will not be inquired of by you. Also that which comes up into your mind shall surely not happen, that which you are saying, We will be as the nations, as the families of the countries to serve wood and stone.

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by the ancestors of Israel (cf. Gen. 22: 1-19). Our oldest documents suggest amelioration of the earlier conditions (Exod. 34: 20; 13: 2, 13; Numb. 3: 46, 47). There were many other statutes that were not good to the prophets. To Ezekiel all such were given by Yahweh, the supreme ruler, to Israel as punishment for their refusal to observe the good laws. Jeremiah a little earlier considered that the false pen of the scribes was to blame (cf. Jer. 8: 8; 19: 5; 7: 31). The N. T. faces the same problem and concludes that Moses wrote because of your hardness of heart (Mark 10: 5; Matt. 19: 8). Evil in the world is still a problem.

20: 27-29. THE ISRAELITES IN CANAAN WERE STILL IDOLATERS. They followed after the Baal of the land. Though brief and restrained, this paragraph has the same tone as chap. 16. The local sanctuaries were appropriated by the invaders and fertility rites were practised. The pun in vs. 29 is obscure and difficult to translate. Probably it exposed some cult feature and no doubt there was a sting in it. *Incense* was used in worship in Canaan before the entrance of the Hebrews, as is proven by the incense altars discovered in various sites excavated, and libations, or drink-offerings to the gods must have been very ancient.

20: 30-32. THE PRESENT GENERATION PRACTISES all the abominations of the fathers, and are even planning to serve the gods of the surrounding nations. Such were the practices of the majority of the Israelites at this period. Many of them, as they tried to understand their history, concluded that Yahweh would neither do good nor do evil (Zeph. 1: 12), or that it was better with them in the days when they served the Assyrian gods (cf. Jer. 44: 15-19). Ezekiel's conclusion was that idolatry is so abominable to Yahweh that he refused to give any answer to the visiting elders of Israel (3, 31).

33 By my life, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh,
But no, with a strong hand and an out-
stretched arm, and with wrath poured
34 out, I will be king over you. And I
will bring you out from the peoples,
and I will gather you from the coun-
tries where you are scattered, with a
strong hand and an outstretched arm

20:33-44. YAHWEH'S KINGLY PROMISE, JUDGMENT AND DELIVERANCE. The atmosphere here is entirely different from that of the above. Clearly it comes from a later period and is addressed to quite different conditions. Yahweh is a sovereign; he acts as a king; he brings the peoples from the countries and will judge them. The wilderness of the peoples, is in contrast to the wilderness of Egypt, but cannot be definitely located. He will make them pass under the rod as the shepherd does at eventide when he brings the sheep into the fold. One at a time they pass into the fold under the rod, and he counts them to find out if any are missing. With Yahweh, however, it is for the purpose of chastisement and for the detection of the rebels, a faint parallel to the entrance gates into the temple (40:5-37). Some of these rebels, however, must be excluded from the community of those who are going to be reinstated in Palestine (38). The idea of a purified people, which became so prominent from the time of Ezra on, is felt by the prophet to be one of the needs of the hour. Later we find the same idea in the New Testament, Come ye out from among them and be ye separate (2 Cor. 6:17).

The promise of restoration concludes the chapter, and is a message of hope couched in priestly terms. On *my holy mountain* all the house of Israel shall serve Yahweh with legitimate offerings. A high mountain may be used in contrast to the plains of Babylonia (cf. 17:22; 37:22) and may be preparatory to the temple vision (cf. 40:2; Micah 4:2-5; Isa. 2:1-4). Offerings is the translation of a word used for contributions of various types for religious purposes. It came into use not earlier than the 7th century (Deut. 12:6, 11); is used frequently in the temple vision (44:30; 45:1, 6, 7; 48:10, 18, 20, 21); and is in common use in the Priestly Code. The sweet smoke of incense (41) is the same as that condemned in vs. 6. A prophet could easily condemn the ritual of other people, but when he came to set up a pure ritual for a pure people, he had to borrow at least some of the old vocabulary. One wonders how to evaluate ritual and the spirit behind the ritual in religion.

By means of you I will be sanctified (41) has in it the missionary idea again found in the Servant Songs (Isa. 42:1-4; 49:6). Many Hebrew teachers recognized that God revealed himself in human history and that an elect nation or a good man was the best medium for the divine expression.

Nauseated because of all your evils (43) or loathe yourselves because of all your evil (Moffatt), is literally "to feel loathing against your faces." It is an intense shame which produces a violent physical reaction. The same expression is used in other places in the book (6:9; 16:63) and thinks of repentance as profoundly changing the inner nature of the individual. Thus it is allied to the new heart.

Yet, significant as this is, it is for the honor of the name of Yahweh that they are to be restored (44). Yahweh is sovereign, but he restored only those of the finest integrity. Profound repentance on the part of the people goes hand in hand with careful observance of a stately ritual; both are acceptable to Yahweh. But it is Yahweh who delivers, who saves, and that for his own honor. In true religion man is completely bound up in and devoted to Deity, but in all God is the absolute sovereign.

20:45–21:32. The chapter division in the English versions differs from that in the Hebrew Bible, which begins chap. 21

35 and with wrath poured out. And I will
bring you into the wilderness of the
peoples, and I will enter into judgment
36 with you there, face to face. Even as I
entered into judgment with your fathers
in the wilderness of the land of Egypt,
so will I enter into judgment with
37 you. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh. And
I will cause you to pass under the
rod. Then I will bring you under chas-
38 tisement [7] and I will purge from you
the rebellious and those who trans-
gress against me. From the land of
their sojourn I will bring them, but
into the land of Israel they shall not
enter.[8] Then you shall know that I am
Yahweh.
39 And you, O house of Israel, thus says
(Lord) Yahweh, Go ahead every one!
Serve his filthy images! But hereafter
you shall surely listen to me, and my
holy name you shall no more profane
with your gifts and your filthy images.
40 But on my holy mountain, on a high
mountain of Israel, Oracle of (Lord)
Yahweh, there shall all the house of
Israel serve me, all of it in the land.
There will I be pleased to accept them

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with 20:45 of the English translation. In this case the Hebrew follows the relation of ideas better than do our translations. For our analysis we follow the translation, placing the Hebrew text division in brackets.

There are three main divisions in this section: 20:45–21:23 [21:1-28], Jerusalem will be destroyed; 21:24-27 [21:29-32], Zedekiah will be dethroned; and 21:28-32 [21:33-37], the Ammonites will be punished.

The 1st division falls into four parts: Destruction by fire, 20:45-49 [21:1-5]; destruction by sword, 21:1-7 [21:6-12]; the song of the sword, 21:8-17 [21:13-22]; and the sword of Babylon is ordained by Yahweh, 21:18-23 [21:23-28].

The song of the sword, 21:8-17, is a poem that has suffered through copying and interpretation. Parts of it seem unintelligible. As reconstructed and translated by Hölscher—who has rescued about one-third of it from what he considers scribal débris—it is a vigorous, primitive war song. Probably more of it may be reclaimed by a less arbitrary conception of Ezekiel's literary style. But there is clear evidence that the original had fine rhythmic movement and telling assonances, which in some places have been obscured. No one hesitates to ascribe it to Ezekiel, who by virtue of this and other similar poems ranks as a worthy singer in Israel. The remaining parts of this section are prose, but are not unworthy of a prophet. All unite in one theme and form part of a whole, and come from the time following Zedekiah's rebellion and overtures to Egypt in 593, and precede the investment of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 588. Nebuchadnezzar is on his way; destruction of the city is certain; Zedekiah will be dethroned, for such is the will of Yahweh. That the speaker was in Palestine is conclusive from such words as those used for *south* (20:45 EV.), *turn your face* (20:45; 21:2 EV.), the king of Babylon *is come* (21:18 EV.). All of these speeches and acts would be meaningful in or near Jerusalem, but among captives in Babylonia would be waste words. Hence it is safe to conclude that Ezekiel, about 588 B. C., in these four paragraphs expressed his conviction that Nebuchadnezzar would destroy Jerusalem.

The 2d division, 21:24-27, Zedekiah will be dethroned. Though this is a new oracle, by its judicial phraseology, *bring to remembrance, be taken,* vs. 24 is directly connected with 23b. These two vss. may be a scribal link to connect what precedes with what follows. Vss. 25-27 are important. Zedekiah is to be stripped of his insignia, and the rule is to pass to one whose right it is. If this comes from Ezekiel—and it well might—Jeconiah is the one whom he considers the rightful ruler of Israel (cf. 17:22-24; 2 Kings 25:27; Com. Ezek. 4:4-6). A date some time after 586 is most likely for these vss., but no word suggests the place of origin.

**and there will I require your offerings,
and the best of your offerings with all
41 your consecrated things. I will be
pleased with your sweet smoke of incense,
when I bring you out from the
peoples and gather you out from the
countries where you have been scattered.
Then by means of you I will be
sanctified in the sight of the nations.
42 And you shall know that I am Yahweh
when I bring you into the land of
Israel, that land that I pledged myself
43 to give to your fathers. Then you shall
remember your ways and all your doings
whereby you defiled yourself, and
you shall be nauseated because of all
44 your evils that you practised. Then
you shall know that I am Yahweh when
I do with you for the sake of my name,
not according to your evil deeds, nor
according to your corrupt doings, Oh
house of Israel. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.**

**EV20:45 And the word of Yahweh came
MT21:1 to me as follows: Mortal man
20:46 turn your face toward the south,
21:2 and utter the word against [1] the
south and prophesy against [1]
the forest which is in the south,[2]
20:47 and say to the forest of the south,
21:3 Hear the word of Yahweh, Thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, Lo! I am
kindling in you a fire and it shall
devour every green tree and every
dry tree in you, and the blazing
flame shall not be quenched, and by
it every face from south to north
20:48 shall be scorched, and all mankind
21:4 shall observe that I Yahweh have
kindled it. It shall not be**

The 3d division, 21:28-32, is a curse on Ammon. This is later than 25:1-7, and the mosaic type of composition suggests that it is the work of a scribe who knew the later Ammonite history and ambitions, and incorporated his racial reactions here because of the use of the Song of the Sword. This may well be as late as the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 2:10, 19; 13:23).

20:45-49 [21:1-5]. Destruction of Judah by fire. The south, for which 3 different words are used, is the land of Judah, practically all of which lay south of Jerusalem and stretched away beyond Beersheba. At the present time there is no forest in all this area. A small grove of scrub oak, the only one today in Judah, crowns the hills of Eschol to the west of Jerusalem; around springs and in some of the wadies there are sparse thickets; vineyards and olive groves frequently adorn the valleys and hillsides; in village gardens there is found a scant variety of other trees, while here and there a lone tree dots the horizon; but of natural forests there is none. In Old Testament times it was different. Not only did the olive and vine flourish, but the oak, palm, acacia, terebinth, locust, and willow were thriving—in the time of our prophet. Turkish rule for over 500 years—under which there were few incentives for preserving or developing natural resources—is responsible in large part for impoverishment of the land and for vanished forests. Fire, which is both devastating and purifying, is frequently used as a symbol of the displeasure of Yahweh (cf. Isa. 9:18; 10:17-19; Jer. 21:14; Zech. 11:1-3; Amos 7:4). Here, as frequently, it refers to the invading army. Nebuchadnezzar came in 588-586. The ruthlessness of his operations is here pictured. Every tree, dry and green, is to be burned up, and every face from south to north is to be scorched. The excavations of recent years reveal that a number of the cities of Judah were destroyed about 600 B. C., and never rebuilt. This would prove that the prophet's fear was, in general, well founded. The devastation was widesweeping and merciless. All *mankind shall observe*, like so many universals in the O. T., is an Orientalism and not to be taken literally (cf. 12:16; 17:24; 21:5). To find in it the foregleam of an evangel to the heathen and a forecast of the Messianic kingdom is to ignore the teaching of the prophet in the interest of theological theory. What is said here is, that when the Babylonian army desolates the country like fire, peoples far and wide shall conclude that this is the judgment of Yahweh on his people Israel for their sins.

EV20:49 quenched. Then I said, Alas
MT21:5 (Lord) Yahweh, these are saying
of me, Surely he is speaking in
parables.

EV21:1 And the word of Yahweh came
21:6 to me as follows: Mortal man turn
21:2 your face against [1] Jerusalem,
21:2 and utter the word against [1] her
21:7 sanctuary,[3] and prophesy
against[1] the land of Israel,
21:3 and say to the land of Israel,
21:3 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Lo! I
21:8 am against you and will draw my
sword from its sheath and will
cut off from you both righteous
21:4 and wicked. Because I cut off
21:4 from you both righteous and
21:9 wicked, therefore my sword shall
go forth from its shield against[1]
all mankind from south to north,
EV21:5 and all mankind shall know that
21:5 I Yahweh, drew my sword out
MT21:10 of its sheath. It shall not return
21:6 again. Therefore you, O mortal
21:6 man, sigh, with writhing of the
21:11 loins, and with bitterness, sigh before
their eyes.
21:7 And when they say to you, Why
21:7 are you sighing? Then you shall
21:12 say, because [1] of the report.
For it comes, and every heart
melts, and all hands are limp, and
every spirit faints and all knees
are drenched with water. See! it
comes! It is here! Oracle of
(Lord) Yahweh.
21:8 And the word of Yahweh came

The people accused the prophet of speaking in proverbs, or riddles (20:49). Not that they misunderstood his message, but they did not take it seriously. Like many who listen to disquisitions on ethical subjects, they agreed to the general propositions rather than to the immediate, personal application (cf. 12:9; 17:12; 33:31-32).

Chapter 21

21:1-7 [21:6-12]. JERUSALEM, ESPECIALLY HER SANCTUARY (1-5), is to be destroyed. The sword of the invader adds to the terror of fire. Like many a preacher, Ezekiel but repeats in changed form what he had previously declared (cf. 9:6, 7; 10:18, 19; 11:22, 23). Both the righteous and the wicked are to suffer in the catastrophe (3). As this is not in agreement with the doctrine that each man will suffer for his own sins, so clearly stated in 9:4-6; 18:1-28; 33:10-16, it has caused exegetes much perplexity. But no writer is always verbally consistent, and like a parable no doctrine can go on all fours. In addition to this, we note that the clear-cut statement of individualism was not made until 586, or some time thereafter. If the ordinary teacher sometimes changes his point of view, how much more may a prophet grow in wisdom in the things of God? Ezekiel, sighing and exhibiting bodily pain (6), is to be a walking illustration of his convictions. This parallels the symbolism found in the early parts of the book (4:1–5:12; 12:1-20), and expresses the deep personal grief of the prophet over the coming tragedy (cf. 9:8-11; 11:13). Why are you sighing? is quite rhetorical, for the people understood the teaching of the prophet, but were unconvinced of its truth (cf. 20:49).

The report was not that Jerusalem had fallen, but that the Babylonian army was on the march, and may have been leaving Riblah in the north on its way to punish the rebels (24:2; Jer. 34:1; 52:3, 4). The verbs used here are perfects, the so-called perfect of prophetic certainty, as in other utterances (cf. 7:1-13).

21:8-17 [21:13-22]. THE SONG OF THE SWORD is in the main self-explanatory. It is a war-song in which Yahweh is represented as giving the sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, for the purpose of punishing Israel. It is rhythmic and vigorous. Such songs were accompanied by the clap of the hands and the stamp of the foot. Single words, or short phrases, such as sword, double it, treble it, the great one, the terror to them, were made to do duty for ideas. The imagination was left free to supply

MT21:13 to me as follows: Mortal man,
EV21:9 prophesy and say, Thus says
(Lord) Yahweh, Say:

Sword, sword, sharpened and
burnished,
21:10 For slaughter is it burnished,
That it may be as burnished
lightning.
(Or shall we make mirth, the
rod of my son is despised by
every tree) [4]
21:11 Then he gives it to the slayer [5]
21:16 To be grasped in the hand.
Sharpened is the sword.
Yes, it is burnished,
To give to the hand of the slayer.
21:12 Shriek and wail, O mortal man,
21:17 For it has come upon my people.
It is against all the princes of
Israel.
Those delivered to the sword
are my people,
Therefore smite upon [1] the
thigh.
21:13 (Therefore a testing, and what
21:18 if also the despised rod
shall not be) [6]

Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
21:14 Therefore, you, O mortal man
prophesy,
And smite palm to palm,
And let it be doubled,
Sword! Treble it.
Sword! Those fatally wounded.
Sword of the slain, the great one,
The terror to them.
EV21:15 So that their hearts melt,
That the fallen [8] beside all
their gates increase.
I have given slaughter to the
sword.
Alas! It is made as lightning,
Sharpened [9] for slaughter.
21:16 Strike furiously [10] to the right,
Thrust to the left,
Wherever your double-edged
blade is appointed.
21:17 I, then will smite my palms
21:22 together,
And will cause my anger to rest,
I, Yahweh, have spoken.

21:18 And the word of Yahweh came
21:23 to me as follows: You, O mortal
21:19 man, mark out for yourself two
highways, by which the sword of
the king of Babylon may come.
From one land the two of them
come. And make a sign-post at
the forks of the road to each city.
21:20 (make) [11] You shall mark out
21:25 a road for the sword, this one to

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details, and nothing was important save stirring the emotions. Hence the song in its original form would scarcely present a logical sequence of ideas, or a finely cut cameo on punishment or war. Indeed, strong emotion is more likely to be aroused by isolated words and phrases—even unintelligible—than by profound treatises on ethics. In view of this fact, the reconstruction of this poem, attempted by some of the keenest scholars, has probably lost much of the original. Under any circumstances we know its spirit and note that Ezekiel looked on Nebuchadnezzar as the instrument of Yahweh, as did Jeremiah at the same period (cf. Jer. 25: 9; 27: 6; 43: 10).

Smiting on the thigh (12) was a sign of remorse (Jer. 30: 19). That Yahweh should be represented as clapping his hands is very unusual. Here it is a sign that the destruction is complete; his anger is appeased; the end has come.

21: 18-23 [21: 23-28]. THE KING OF BABYLON IS ON THE MARCH, coming from the north to quell the revolt (Jer. 52: 3, 4; 39: 1; 2 Kings 25: 1). In imagination the prophet sees the king in the north, at the dividing of the caravan routes, one leading east to Rabbah of the Ammonites, the other diverging south by west toward Jerusalem. Both were guilty cities, and which should suffer first would be determined by lot. Rabbah of the children of Ammon, situated on the Jabbok, some 20 miles east of the Jordan, was always an important center in Transjordania. For long the capital city of the Ammonites, in 588 it rebelled against Babylonia and now must pay the penalty.

Nebuchadnezzar used 3 methods of divination. He shook the arrows, one inscribed with Rabbah, and the other with Jerusalem. Probably after some ritual, such as prayer by the priest, either a priest or the king drew out from the bag,

Rabbath Ammon, and that one to
Judah, which encloses Jerusalem.
EV21: 21 For the king of Babylon stands at
the parting of the roads, at the
head of the two ways, to use divination.
He shakes the arrows to
and fro. He consults the teraphim.
21: 22 He inspects the liver. In
MT21: 27 his right hand is the lot, Jerusalem,
(to place battering
rams)[12] to let loose the warcry,[13]
to lift up the voice with
a shout, to place battering rams
against her gates,[14] to cast up
mounds, to build forts.
21: 23 To them it is as an empty divination.
In their eyes they have
weeks upon weeks. But he brings
iniquity to remembrance, that they
may be captured.
21: 24 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
21: 29 because you have brought to
memory your iniquity in the uncovering
of your transgressions, so
that your sins are seen in all your
doings, (because of your being
brought to remembrance)[15] you
shall be taken by them.[16]
EV21: 25 But you, O prince of Israel,
MT21: 30 wounded, wicked, whose day has
come, in the time for final judgment
21: 26 for guilt. Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, Remove the mitre. Take
off the crown. (this not this)[17]
Up with the low, down with the
21: 27 high. Ruin, ruin, ruin I will
make it, (This also is not)[18] until
he come whose right it is, and
I will give it to him.
21: 28 And you, O mortal man, prophesy
21: 33 and say, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh
to the Ammonites, even to
their disgrace, thus say,

Sword, sword, drawn to slay
Burnished as lightning [19]

21: 29 to you, in vain visions and lying
divinations, it came that you
should lay it [20] on the necks of
the mortally wounded, the wicked,
whose day, the time of final judg-

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or quiver, one of them. By this they believed they had divine direction. The 2d method was by using the teraphim. These were widely used and seem to be related to ancestor worship; but we have lost the ritual (cf. Judges 17: 18; Hosea 3: 4; Zech. 10: 2). To be absolutely sure they were following the will of the gods, a 3d method, inspecting the liver, was resorted to. This was peculiarly Babylonian, and was widely used (cf. Exod. 29: 13, 22; Lev. 3: 4, 10, 15; 4: 9; 7: 4; 9: 10). Such were the approved methods of knowing the will of God in the ancient days. In this case it is probable that Jerusalem was taken.

The actual siege methods are here indicated (21; cf. 4: 2). The fortifications of the hill cities in Palestine were reported to be among the most impregnable in the ancient East. 20 to 30 feet thick and upwards of 40 feet in height, the largest and strongest engines of war were required to reduce them. In the case of Jerusalem the siege lasted almost 2 years. Battering-rams, mounds and forts were essential.

This report with Ezekiel's interpretation of it was to the dwellers in Jerusalem an empty divination. The superficial optimists put off the evil day. They said they had plenty of time. Such is human nature; we always dream that in the last moment there will be some way of escaping the consequences of past neglect. The prophet and the wise man, on the other hand, insist on facing reality and being prepared for the worst. Because of their iniquity they will be captured (23).

21: 24-27 [21: 29-32]. THE PRINCE OF ISRAEL, ZEDEKIAH, will be judged and removed from the throne. *The low*, probably the exiles in Babylonia, will be exalted, while the rulers in Jerusalem, that is those who are exalted, will be abased. He whose right it is, may be the exiled king Jeconiah (cf. Introd. xxv).

21: 28-32 [21: 33-37]. THE AMMONITES ARE CURSED. During the days of distress in Jerusalem in 586, the Ammonites, formerly their allies in rebellion against Babylon, had been unfriendly (Jer. 40: 14). Later some of them had crossed the Jordan and profited by the weakness of Judah (Josh. 18: 24; Neh.

EV21:30 ment, is come. Put it back in its
sheath. In the place where you
were found, in the land of your
21:31 birth, I will judge you. And I
will pour out against you my in-
dignation, the fire of my wrath I
will blow against you, and I will
give you into the hand of bar-
barous men, expert in destruction.
21:32 You shall be fuel for the fire.
Your blood shall be in the depths
of the earth. You shall not be
remembered, for I am Yahweh, I
have spoken.

22:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: O mortal man, will you
judge (will you judge)[1] the bloody
city, and teach her all her abomina-
3 tions? Then say, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh. Any city pouring out blood
in her midst, her time has come. And
one that makes filthy images, defile-
4 ment has come on her. Because of the
blood you have shed you are guilty,
and you are unclean because of the
filthy images you have made. Now you
have brought near your day,[2] indeed
the time of your year has come.[3]

2: 10, 19; 4: 3, 7). Apparently they had appropriated, as expressing their own attitude, the now ancient song of Ezekiel, the Song of the Sword. This late writer curses them in the name of Yahweh for their sins from the time of the fall of Jerusalem until the time of his writing. It was their day of judgment, and they must return to the land of their birth. A barbarous people, possibly the Nabatæans, who were pressing north from southwestern Arabia in the 5th century B. C., will destroy them. Their blood will be buried so deep in the earth that no cry for vengeance will ever be heard by their avenger of blood (cf. Gen. 4: 10; Ezek. 24: 7; Job 16: 18; Rev. 6: 9).

Chapter 22

22: 1-31. JERUSALEM'S SINS DEMAND DESTRUCTION. Three independent sections, each dealing with the destruction of the city, are here united. The bloody city, because of party strife, oppression and abominable social and religious practices, will be destroyed and her people scattered world-wide, 1-16. The end has come, 1-5, the sins are catalogued, 6-16. Vs. 8 breaks in on the narrative and may be scribal. The sins enumerated, 6-16, are all legislated against in both Deut. and Lev. Only in Jerusalem, and at a time shortly preceding the fall in 586, would it be an effective message. It fits in with the general style and thought of Ezekiel. Hölscher holds that it was written in Babylonia, but that it was a purely literary production (Hölscher, 117). Vss. 17-22, the smelting furnace, are quite in keeping with the literary method of Ezekiel and belong apparently to the same period. The 3d section, 23-31, condemns all classes for their respective sins. It closely parallels Zeph. 3: 3, 4, and is a fair résumé of the sins condemned by our prophet. But vss. 24, 26 and 30 lift it out of the commonplace. Priestly interests are in evidence (26), and if from Ezekiel, it came from the period of reconstruction.

22: 1-5. THE END IS AT HAND. Will you judge the city? repeats 20: 4 (q. v.). The bloody city is a new phrase, freely used in this chapter (3, 4, 6, 9, 12, 13) for an old indictment (11: 6; 18: 10; 9: 1-8). The pouring out of blood is a general accusation, the details of which are indefinite. In it there seems to be no reference to human sacrifice. It is thrown in contrast to idolatry, and refers to the results of economic and social injustice. It followed from party strife in which princes (6), slanderers (9) and hired assassins (12) engaged. This had been a tragic side in the history of Jerusalem, and at few periods was such strife more serious than during the closing decades of the city's history (cf. 9: 9; 11: 6; 2 Kings 21: 23, 24; 23: 20; 24: 1; 25: 1, 25; Jer. 41: 1-10).

Added to this were the gross injustices that were practised on the stranger, the poor and the needy. This, if it did not

Therefore I have made you a reproach
to the nations and a scoffing to all the
5 countries, those that are near and those
that are far from you shall scorn you,
defiler of honor, multiplier of tumults.
6 Lo! the princes of Israel, each according
to his power has been in you to
7 shed blood. Father and mother they
have despised, in you. In your midst
they have oppressed the resident alien,
they have wronged in you the orphan
8 and the widow. My holy things you
have despised, and my sabbaths you
9 have profaned. Men who slander are
in you to shed blood, and in you they
eat with the blood,[4] in your midst
10 they practise unchastity. The father's
nakedness they uncover, in you. In
you, they lie with the unclean from
11 impurity. One, does the abominable
thing with his neighbor's wife, another
lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law, while
a third lies with his sister, his father's
12 daughter. Bribes they take in you in
order to shed blood. Usury and increase
you take, and by means of oppression
you have plundered your neighbor,
and me you have forgotten. Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh.
13 Now, note, I have clapped my hands

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immediately lead to death, crushed out energy and vitality (12, 13). Extreme greed on the part of the strong who ruthlessly exploit the weak, automatically brings destruction. Such is the prophetic appreciation of human values. Any city pouring out blood in her midst—her time has come (3), is a refrain throughout. It is the antithesis of the law of the jungle, the survival of the fittest. The prophet never concluded that might is right.

But idolatry was an added reason for the punishment of the city (3, 4). These two, shedding of blood and worshiping filthy images, were outstanding evils. Hence *your day*, the time of your year, and her time had come. These phrases, earlier, may have had a mythological origin, referring to the day of Yahweh (cf. Amos 1: 2; 5: 18); as they were used later in eschatology they indicate final judgment (cf. Isa. 2: 12; Mal. 3: 23; Zech. 14: 1), but here they are used simply for the day of disaster. As in other passages, the coming disaster is so inevitable it is spoken of as accomplished (4).

22: 6-16. THE CATALOGUE OF SINS. The princes, here the kings of Judah, as leaders, are held guilty. The measure of each one's power is the measure of his guilt. Self-interest has dominated their actions, and ancient customs and human welfare alike have suffered. Despising parents (7) violated one of the deepest rooted customs of the East (Exod. 20: 12; 21: 17; Deut. 5: 16; Lev. 19: 3). Reverence for ancestors helped to create a sense of racial stability and pride. The resident alien had rights and privileges that should be respected (Exod. 22: 21-23; Deut. 24: 17; Lev. 16: 29; 17: 8, 10, 12; 19: 23). These, of whom there seem to have been many, belonged to groups alien to the Hebrews, some of them probably going back in origin to the early Canaanites, and the tolerance demanded toward such settlements was essential to the peace and prosperity of the state. The orphan and the widow always found in the prophet a special advocate. Humanity and religion alike insisted that they should be cared for and treated with consideration (Deut. 10: 18; Jer. 7: 6, 7; 22: 3, 4; Deut. 14: 29; 16: 11, 14; 26: 12; 24: 17-20). Herein Hebrew custom built more wisely than Spartan law. Slanderers were busy in those feverish days in Jerusalem, each seeking his own interest (cf. Jer. 9: 3-5; 6: 28), and legislation from about this period rebuked the tale-bearer (Lev. 19: 16). Eating with the blood had long been taboo in Israel (cf. 18: 6, 11, 15; Deut. 18: 6). The social sins condemned in vss. 10, 11 are all legislated against in Lev. 17-26. The evidence is not only that they were prevalent sins of the day, but that some of them at one time had been considered in good form. Having commerce with a father's concubine was not only practised among some of the early Arab tribes (Kinship and Marriage, 89), but a number of such cases have been preserved in the Old Testament (cf. 2 Sam. 16:

against [6] your plunder that you have
gained, and against your bloodshed [7]
14 that you have in your midst. Will
your heart be steadfast or your hands
strong in the day [8] that I am pre-
paring for you. I, Yahweh, have spoken,
15 and I will do it. Yes, I will scatter you
among the nations and disperse you in
the countries, and I will consume com-
16 pletely out of you your filthiness, and
you will be profaned in the sight of
all [9] the nations. Then you shall
know that I am Yahweh.
17 And the word of Yahweh came to me
18 as follows: Mortal man, the house of
Israel, all of them, are to me as dross.
Bronze and tin and iron and lead in
the midst of the furnace, they are dross
19 (silver).[10] Therefore, thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, Because all of you are as
dross, therefore I am gathering you into
20 the midst of Jerusalem, as [11] silver
and bronze and iron and lead and tin
are gathered into the midst of the fur-
nace to blow the fire on it and to melt
it.[12] So I will gather you [13] in my
anger, and in my wrath, and I will place
21 you there so that I may melt you. Yes,
I will gather you, and I will blow on
you with the fire of my indignation, and
22 you shall be melted in her midst. As
silver is melted [14] in the midst of
the furnace, so shall you be melted in
her midst. Then you shall know that I
Yahweh have poured out my wrath
against you.
23 And the word of Yahweh came to me
24 as follows: Mortal man say to her, You
are a land without rain [15] or
shower [16] in the day of my indigna-
25 tion. Whose princes [17] in the midst
of her are like a roaring lion, tearing
the prey, they devour people. Treas-
ure and precious things they take. They
multiply her widows in her midst.
26 Her priests do violence to my law and

20-23, prob. 2 Sam. 3:6-8). Long before this, however, it had fallen under the ban of the Hebrews (Lev. 18:7). Lying with a woman in her impurity was likewise condemned (Lev. 18:19). Adultery violated all the feelings of chastity among the Israelites, and was severely dealt with (Deut. 22:21-23; Jer. 7:9; cf. Ezek. 16:40). Having relation with the father's daughter was permissible in earlier days (Gen. 20:12; 2 Sam. 13:17), and was a hangover from the early hunting stage, when careful distinction was made between the father's daughter and the mother's daughter. Then the mother was the permanent element in the home, while the father ofttimes was a transient. When these people took up a sedentary life in Palestine their laws kept pace with their culture (Lev. 20:17). Taking bribes in order to shed blood, reads as though there were lawless leaders in the city who were willing to do anything for the sake of gain. Life was held cheaply and there were those who for thirty pieces of silver—or less—would remove an undesirable character.

The dark side of the picture of the city's morals is complete. It was a time of siege, and war ethics were the order of the day. The restraints of culture were weakened in the hour of terror and despair; there was a return to the primitive, the selfish, the bestial. The prophet, however, had not lost his sense of values. He knew that this inner corruption was more serious than the destructive power of the Babylonian army without the city wall. He knew that it weakened heart and hand of the people as they faced the future (14), and he looked on the moral corruption as casual to the coming material destruction. There is no doubt but that such crimes and vices would lead to the downfall of any nation.

22:17-22. JERUSALEM IS A SMELTING FURNACE. The interpretation is self-evident. Jerusalem is the caldron, the invading army, the fire, Yahweh himself the responsible agent (20, 22). The people are only the slag or dross that must be thrown out on the refuse heap. The parable speaks of destruction, not of purification or deliverance.

22:23-31. ALL CLASSES ARE GUILTY. Vs. 24, though detached from the section, is a clear-cut message. The fertility of Palestine depended on the annual rainfall, which for some 50 years has averaged 26 inches. Any diminution thereof reacts

profane my holy things. Between the sacred and the secular they do not distinguish, nor do they teach men to recognize the difference between the unclean and the clean, and to my sabbaths they have closed their eyes. Thus I am
27 profaned in your midst. Her high officials are as wolves in her midst, tearing the prey, to pour out blood, even destroying people for the sake of
28 dishonest gain. And her prophets smear on whitewash for them, having visions that are vain, divining lies for them, saying, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, when Yahweh has not spoken.
29 The people of the land practise oppression and take plunder. The poor and the needy, they wrong, and the resident alien they unjustly oppress.
30 I, however, sought among them for one who would build up the wall, and would stand in the breach before me for the sake of the land, so that I should not destroy it, but no one could
31 I find. So I poured out against them my indignation. In the fire of my wrath I consumed them. Their deeds I have placed on their heads. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

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at once on the food supply. A drought that lasts a few years is almost fatal (2 Kings 17:1-7), and was to the people the unquestioned sign of the displeasure of Yahweh (2 Sam. 21:1-9). Hence the immediate conclusion of the premise was that their distress was due to the indignation of Yahweh (Deut. 11:17).

All groups were guilty. The princes were roaring, devouring lions (25; cf. 19:3, 6; 32:21; Jer. 2:15; espc. Zeph. 3:3, 4). The priests were violating the law. While this may refer to the book of the law legalized in 621 (2 Kings 22-23), more probably it refers to laws and ritual practices that were in the making, and embodied the cult ideas of a small group of priestly leaders. New regulations were always coming into being, and the majority of the priests would naturally cling to the old and outworn practices. In Jerusalem there were priests who specialized in animal worship (8:8-12), others who were experts in Tammuz worship (8:14), and still others who favored sun worship (8:16, 17), while some insisted that Yahweh could not be worshiped through any of these ceremonies. There was perpetual conflict as to the ways and means of most adequately worshiping God. Ezekiel probably was of those who insisted on purifying the worship. He distinguished between sacred and secular, between clean and unclean. Others either did not, or did not agree with his distinctions. Hence the eternal struggle between priestly groups. Ezekiel's attitude was in keeping with regulations that are embodied in Deuteronomy and in Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26).

The high officials, or magistrates (27, 28), are as wolves, more interested in personal gain than in humanity (cf. Zeph. 3:4); the prophets are daubers and smearers (28; cf. 13:10), while the common people are like the leaders (29; cf. 39:12). In his despair the prophet cries out, that no one could be found who could build the wall or stand in the breach (cf. Zeph. 1:12). No doubt there were many true, God-fearing men in the country; like Jeremiah, Baruch and Gedaliah. This wail is akin to the pessimism of Elijah, "I only am left," while a keener vision says there are 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:9-14, 18). One of the chief marks of a prophet is his ability to criticise his own age and his own people; ever to keep his ideals beyond the horizon of present achievement.

Chapter 23

23:1-49. HARLOTRY WILL BE PUNISHED. There are two independent sections in this chapter: the 1st 1-35, the 2d 36-49. The 1st is a companion picture to that in chap. 16, using the same symbolism, harlotry, with the same conclusion. Samaria and Jerusalem were harlots from their youth, 1-4. Samaria was destroyed because of unfaithfulness to Yahweh, 5-10. Jerusalem is worse than Samaria ever was, and hence will suffer

23:1 The word of Yahweh came to me as
2 follows: Mortal man, there were two
3 women, daughters of one mother. They
played the harlot in Egypt. In their
youth they were harlots. There,[1]
were their bosoms fondled; there, were
4 pressed [2] their virgin breasts. And
their names were, Oholah the older and
Oholibah her sister. They were my wives
and bore sons and daughters. And their
names, Oholah was Samaria and Oholibah
was Jerusalem.
5 Now Oholah played the harlot, faithless
to me,[3] for she lusted after her
lovers, after [4] the Assyrians, her lords,
6 clothed in purple, governors and pre-

greater disaster, 11-35. Vs. 21, using the second personal pronoun throughout, while the context uses the third, seems to be the work of a scribe. Vss. 28-30 break the continuity between 27 and 31, and are a weak parallel of 22-27; they reflect the actual experience of 586, and are usually considered a scribal interpolation. Apart from vss. 21, 28-30, there is no reason why this allegory, like that in chap. 16, should not have been written in Jerusalem by Ezekiel preceding 588.

The 2d division, 36-49, in which alliances with foreigners are condemned, is independent, and is related only in symbolism and phraseology to the foregoing. The theme is entirely changed. Oholah and Oholibah now are contemporaries and are alike guilty of pandering to foreign cultures, and shall suffer simultaneously. It reads like an attack on groups, both north and south, who were interested in the amalgamation of races, cultures and religions in Palestine, at the beginning of the 4th century B. C. If so, it may have been written around 400, in support of the Ezra régime against encroaching paganism.

23:1-35. JERUSALEM IS DOOMED. 1-4, introductory. As in chap. 16, both north and south were unfaithful from the beginning (3 cf. 16:3 Com.). The names were probably intended to be meaningful. The word Ohel, meaning tent, is part of each and probably is used as a symbol for the early worship. Oholah, that is, Samaria, is "her tent," implying that in her religion there was an element that was not from Yahweh. Oholibah, that is, Jerusalem, signifies, "my tent is in her," possibly referring to the tent of meeting used in early Hebrew worship. *My wives* (4), implying that Yahweh had wives, did not shock the ancients as it does us. The Canaanites, like all ancient peoples, believed the gods had consorts. Their supernatural world was built on the pattern of the family. The Hebrews, who from their Semitic ancestors inherited the same general conceptions, could scarcely fail to absorb much of the culture of their neighbors, in Palestine. As the children of both heredity and environment they were as familiar with goddesses as with gods. Indeed, in the Jewish colony in Elephantine in Upper Egypt, as late as 400 B. C., not only did the Jews worship Yahweh, but they also paid homage to his two consorts, Anat and Ashima (Assuan Papyri by Cowley, xviii–xix, 70 line 124). The noteworthy feature is not that Yahweh had a consort, but that in the Old Testament literature he stands apart and alone. Here is an indication of the amazing progress made in religious thinking under the leadership of Hebrew prophets and priests.

23:5-10. SAMARIA'S POLITICO-RELIGIOUS HISTORY is briefly summarized. Because of international and military situations, Samaria found herself subject and ally of Assyria (2 Kings 15:19, 20, 29, 30; 17:1-6). For a century before her fall in 722, Assyrian influences had penetrated the life of her cities and villages. The handsome soldiers of the great empire, in dress uniform, mounted on splendid war-horses, must have greatly impressed the natives of Palestine. The social and religious customs of the conquerors were part of the picture. No doubt many succumbed to the allurements of the trium-

fects, all of them chosen for worth,
7 horsemen mounted on war-horses. So
she played the harlot with them, all of
them the chosen men of Assyria, and
with all for whom she lusted she defiled
herself with all their filthy images.
8 Indeed, she did not leave off her harlotries
from the time in Egypt, when
in her youth they had lain with her,
and had pressed her virgin breasts, and
poured out their harlotries on her.
9 Therefore, I gave her into the hands of
her lovers, into the hands of the Assyrians,
10 after whom she lusted. These
uncovered her nakedness, took her sons
and her daughters, and slew her with
the sword. So she became a byword
among women, when they executed
judgments on her.
11 When her sister Oholibah saw, she was
more passionate in her lust than she, and
her harlotries were worse than the harlotries
12 of her sister, she lusted after [4]
the Assyrians, governors and prefects,
lords clothed in purple [5] horsemen
mounted on war-horses, all of them
13 chosen for worth. Then I saw that she
defiled herself,—one way for both,—
14 and she increased her harlotries, for she
saw human figures engraved on the wall,
images of the Chaldeans, outlined in
15 vermilion, girdled with waist-cloths on
their loins, free-flowing turbans bound
round their heads, all of them looking
like captains, Babylonians, whose native
16 land was Chaldea. She lusted after
them as soon as she saw them, and sent
17 messengers to them into Chaldea. Then
the Babylonians went in to her, to the
couch of love, and they defiled her with
their harlotries, so that she became unclean
18 by them; then she became disgusted
with them, and made public her
nakedness. And I became disgusted
with her even as I was disgusted with
her sister.
19 But she multiplied her harlotries,
remembering the days of her youth,
when she played the harlot in the land
20 of Egypt. Thus she lusted after her
paramours, whose flesh is like asses'
flesh, and whose issue is like that of
21 horses. (So you have repeated the
lewdness of your youth when Egypt
fondled [7] your bosom, pressing [8]
your youthful breasts).[6]

phant Assyrians, and adopted the dress, social customs and religious practices of their lords (cf. Hosea 5: 13, 14; 7: 8, 9, 11; 8: 9). All this was reckoned as faithlessness to Yahweh; therefore the city was captured and suffered for her sins (9, 10). That the Assyrian, the lover on whom she lavished her affection, should be her destroyer, was fitting punishment for the harlot (9, 10).

23: 11-35. Jerusalem is worse than was Samaria. Though she saw the disaster that had come to the north, Jerusalem not only did not learn her lesson but plunged into deeper profligacy. Under Ahaz she allied herself with Assyria in 734, much against the wish of the prophets (2 Kings 16: 7-9; Isa. 7: 7-25). Assyrian religion immediately gained such prestige in Jerusalem that the ritual and even the temple itself were radically changed (2 Kings 16: 10-16; 21: 3-9). Under Hezekiah, who had departed from the injunctions of Isaiah, the city was captured in 701 by Sennacherib. On hillside and in city Yahweh worship was again seriously affected (2 Kings 21: 3-9, 16). The vassalage under Manasseh, from 686-641, witnessed the climax of Assyrian power in Jerusalem. Her worship dominated the temple, and short shrift was given to the worshipers of Yahweh (2 Kings 21: 4-6, 16). Relations with Babylonia began in 605, when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaohnecho at Carchemish (2 Kings 24: 1). From then on to the end the strong hand of Babylonia never was lifted from Judah (14-17). Finally Jerusalem became disgusted with Babylonia and began intriguing with Egypt and the neighboring small states (18-21; 2 Kings 24: 1-3, 10; 25: 1). *Made public* her nakedness (18) implies that Judah, in seeking alliances wheresoever she could, had become like the public prostitute. The scorn that is poured out on such attempts at national rehabilitation, by manipulating alliances with outside nations, reaches its climax in vss. 19, 20. Her lust is satisfied only by asses and stallions—considered the most lustful of animals.

22 Therefore Oholibah, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, Lo! I am about to stir up
your lovers against you, those with
whom you are disgusted, and I am
bringing them on you from every side,
23 Babylonians, all the Chaldeans, Pekod
and Shoa and Koa, all the Assyrians
with them,[9] chosen for worth, governors
and prefects, all of them, captains
and far-famed, all of them mounted on
24 war-horses. They are coming against
you, a multitude of chariots, and wagons
with a host of warriors, shield and
buckler and helmet. They shall take
up their places against you, round
about. And I will give to them judgment,
and in their judgments they shall
25 condemn you. Thus will I express
against you my jealous indignation, and
they shall deal with you in fury. Your
nose and your ears they shall cut off,
and what is left of you shall fall by the
sword. They shall carry off your sons
and your daughters, and what is left
26 shall be burnt up by fire. They shall
strip off your clothes, and take away
27 your fine jewels. So will I remove
from you your lewdness and your harlotries
from the land of Egypt. And
you shall not lift up your eyes to them,
28 nor remember Egypt any more. For thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, Lo! I am about to
give you into the hands of those whom
you hate, with whom you are disgusted.
29 And they shall deal with you in hatred,
and shall cut off all your produce, and
shall leave you naked and nude, so the
shame of your harlotries shall be exposed.[10]
30 Your lewdness and your
harlotries have done this to you, when
you played the harlot after the nations
with whose idols you defiled yourself.
31 In the way of your sister you have
walked, so I will give her cup into
32 your hands. Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,

Your sister's cup you shall drink.
It is deep, it is wide.
You shall be a jibe and a jeer.
Very much does it hold.
33 Full shall you be, drunken and dreary.
Cup of affliction, yes desolation.
Cup of your sister, Samaria.
34 Now, you drink it and drain it,
And gnaw, even its fragments,
And your breasts you shall tear.
For I have spoken.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

35 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Because you have forgotten me and cast
me behind your back, therefore you,
yourself shall bear your lewdness and
your harlotries.

23:22-27. NEMESIS IS BOTH CERTAIN AND EXACT. Her lovers, with whom she is sated (22), will be the instruments for punishment. Babylonia is an older and more inclusive term than Chaldea, but Neo-Babylonian would be more accurate for the dynasty that came to the throne in 626, under Nabopolassar, and continued to control the destinies of the Tigris-Euphrates valley until 539. *Pekod*, *Shoa* and *Koa* are names of Aramaic tribes whose territories lay east of the Tigris river, and like the Assyrians had been brought into subjection by this Neo-Babylonian dynasty (23; cf. Jer. 50:21). By the will of Yahweh, these peoples are to be the judges of the guilty city (24). Noses and ears shall be cut off, a not infrequent penalty in ancient war; clothes and jewels would be stripped from the captives. Both were valuable, while the captive in ancient wars was only a slave in a glutted market. Such excruciating, humiliating experiences were interpreted as the means Yahweh took to turn his people from allegiance to other gods (27).

23:31-35. JERUSALEM WILL SUFFER WORSE THAN SAMARIA. The cup was drugged, a common experience in the ancient East (Isa. 51:22, 23; Jer. 25:15, 16; 49:12; Hab. 2:16). The harlot, ancient and modern, often resorted to some such means to deaden the finer sensibilities and at the same time stimulate the lower. A stronger potion was often administered to princes and rulers, and for this reason many in authority had their private cup-bearers, whose office was to test whatever the ruler was to drink. The song is vigorous, and though difficult to reproduce, is easily understood. It must have been effective as first delivered to the people. The author was a poet of high rank, and because of this some wonder if he could have written such wretched prose as we find in parts of the present book.

36 Then Yahweh said to me, Mortal man,
will you judge Oholah and Oholibah,
and show them their abominations?
37 For they have committed adultery and
blood is on their hands. Yes, they have
committed adultery with their filthy images,
also, their sons whom they bore
to me have they caused to pass through
38 the fire to be devoured. Still further,
this have they done to me, they have
profaned my sanctuary, (on that day) [11]
39 and defiled my sabbaths. For when they
sacrificed their sons to their filthy images,
the same day they entered my
sanctuary to pollute it. Behold thus
40 they have done in my house. And
moreover they sent for men who came
from afar, to whom messengers were
sent, and they came. For them you
bathed and painted your eyes and
41 decorated yourself with ornaments, and
sat on a beautiful divan, a table was
spread before it and on it you placed
42 my incense and my oil. Then the sound
of a careless crowd was heard therein.
Men of the rabble were brought in,
wine-bibbers [12] from the desert, and
they placed bracelets on [4] their arms
and beautiful crowns on their heads.
43 Then I said, Adulteries to the full!
Now for her harlotries, let them play
44 the harlot. (even she) [13] And they

23: 36-49. Foreign Alliances are Condemned. Phrase and symbolism here are the same as in the first division; all else is different. The theme of the allegory is the punishment of two adulterous women, Oholah and Oholibah, who after performing idolatrous rites entered the temple, thereby profaning it (37-39). Also they played the harlot with men from afar for whom they had sent (40-44). They shall be judged and convicted by righteous men (45). The assembly shall be called and they shall both be stoned (46, 47), their sons and daughters slain and their houses burned (47). This will be a warning to all women, and unchastity shall be rooted out of the land (48).

It is conceivable that here, as in 1-35, Oholah and Oholibah represent Samaria and Jerusalem. The immediate connection, the symbol and the phrases, most of which come from chap. 16 and 23: 1-35, all lend themselves to this. If so, it must have been written between 516 and 400. Samaria and Jerusalem could scarcely in this way be ranged together between 722 and 586. The literary borrowing from the earlier chapters could not precede 588. Reference to the temple must date it after 516, when the second temple was completed. The partnership between these two peoples, both profaning the temple in Jerusalem, would place it before the Samaritan schism was complete—which was not earlier than 400 nor later than 332. But this national interpretation faces difficulties. The significant terms used are peculiarly theological, and on the whole indicate the post-exilic period. *Righteous men* (45) smacks of class distinctions that arose in the later days. The *assembly* (46) comes in late literature and suggests a "state-church." *My house, profaning my sanctuary, my sabbaths*, all favor a theological situation. Further, it is noteworthy that the judgment is to be a warning to all women (48). These facts seem to render the national interpretation inept.

The theological coloring and the peculiarly personal features, combined with the passion displayed, lead us to wonder if we are not listening to an attack on some group of schismatists. A close scrutiny of the passage convinces us that no more fitting background can be found for this denunciation than that of the conflict that arose in the time of Nehemiah and Ezra over the foreigners who strove for equal rights in city and temple (Ezra 4: 7-16; 9: 1-4; 10: 9-44; Neh. 3: 22–4: 17; 6: 1–7: 19; 13: 4-31). This conflict, which had its roots far back in history, reached its climax about the time of Ezra, and some time thereafter came the definite separation. But between 400 and 332 each of the two groups, the exclusive and the inclusive—or the Ezra and the Sanballat-Manasseh, the Judaistic and the Samaritan—claimed religious privileges in Israel and in the temple. Each group had adherents from Judah and from Sa-

went [14] in to her, even as one goes in
to a harlot. So they went in to Oholah
45 and Oholibah, wanton women. But
just men shall pronounce on them the
judgment of adulteresses, and the judgment of shedders of blood, for they are
adulteresses and blood is on their hands.
46 So thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Call up
the assembly against them, and hand
47 them over to terror and plunder, and
let the assembly stone them with stones
and cut them down [15] with their
swords. Let them slay them, sons and
daughters, and burn their houses with
48 fire. Thus I will cause lewdness to
cease from the land, and all women
shall take warning that they should not
49 imitate your lewdness. And your lewdness shall be placed upon you. Also
you shall bear the sins of your filthy
images, that you may know that I am
(Lord) Yahweh.

maria. It was an intense conflict and left its marks on the literature and the history of the people. The Ezra, or the narrow, racial group that insisted on divorcing wives of foreign blood, won the day. The Priestly Code in its finest details is a monument to their ardor and loyalty. By them, it is probable, Judaism was saved. But their opponents were not without strength and influence. From them have come such telling propaganda as the books of Ruth and Jonah, and words of such rare insight as those found in Isaiah 56:4-8; 19:23-25. In such a clash of opinion we imagine this passionate attack had its origin.

Religion, then, occupies the center of the stage. It was the worship of the foreigner, his filthy images, his strange ritual, his excess of piety in child sacrifice, that is characterized as adultery. For such people to dare join in the worship in the temple was a double profanation (38, 39). *Causing their sons to pass through the fire,* and sacrificing their sons, refers to child sacrifice that was long practised in Palestine (37, 39). When it actually ceased to be an occasional practice is unknown, but in Carthage it continued intermittently down to the 5th century of our era. *Men who come from afar,* indicates world contacts. Such existed as a common feature in Palestinian life from the beginning of the captivity. During the Persian supremacy these developed, and they were enlarged in the Greek period. The condemned groups gladly united with people from all countries, courted them, and with them indulged in religious festivities (40-42). *Painting the eyes* and putting on ornaments are very ancient practices, primarily rooted in the desire to attract (40). Paint smeared on the lower eyelid and on the lashes also protects against insects and sun glare. All such decoration, however, was capitalized by the leisure classes, while courtesans, especially, decked themselves out in finery. All such show seemed to the prophets hollow, and aroused their fiery indignation (cf. Amos 4:1-3; Isa. 3:16-26). *The divan,* the incense and the oil, belong to either the festivities of life, or to the religious ritual, or to both (41). These people indulged in the loud and the flashy, both in religious and in secular life. Such were taboo with the sober-minded.

Such an intermingling of peoples of mixed blood, mongrel speech and strange customs, and the blending of life and ritual were to the group striving for a pure Israel with a worthy worship intolerable. Adultery it was, and the penalty of adultery should be meted out to it (45-47; cf. Deut. 13:10; 21:21, 24; Lev. 20:2; 24:14). Here the judge is not the Babylonian army, but the righteous man, or the assembly. This problem is not to be settled by an outside nation, but by the leaders of the community themselves. The church itself must purge out the unclean element. This is what the Jewish community under the leadership of men like Nehemiah and Ezra actually did. This drastic treatment, when carried out to the letter, should teach all groups never again to align themselves with any foreign movements, for stoning should be the fate of all schismatists (48).

24:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me,
in the tenth month of the ninth year
on the tenth day of the month, as fol-
2 lows: Mortal man, Write down for
yourself the name of this day (on this
very day) [1] the king of Babylon began
the siege against [2] Jerusalem, on this
3 very day. And speak a parable
against [3] the rebellious house, and
say to them, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh:

Set on the caldron, set it on,
Pour water therein.
4 Put the pieces [3] into it,
Every good piece, hip and thigh.
Fill it with choice bones.
5 Take the best of the flock.
Then kindle [4] wood [5] under it.
Let the hunks of flesh [6] boil,
Yes, let the bones seethe.

6 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Woe to the bloody city, that caldron in
which there is filth;[7] and the filth has
not gone from it, (Piece by piece throw
it out, not a lot was cast for it) [7a]
7 because her blood is in her midst. On
the bare rock she placed it; she poured

Chapter 24

24: 1-27 falls into 3 divisions. The 1st, 1-14, the caldron set on the fire, is a symbol of Jerusalem and her inhabitants. Again, it is a picture of the coming desolation at the hand of the Babylonian army. The writer was either in or in the vicinity of Jerusalem at the time of the occurrence. The style is that of Ezekiel approaching his best rather than his worst. It probably should be dated early in 588 B. C. The chronological note in vs. 1 belongs to the general scheme (cf. Introd. xiv). The 2d division, 15-24, mourning signs are prohibited, when the temple falls. Apart from the editorial activity seen in vss. 18, 21b, and 24, this also must have been written to the people in Jerusalem at a time preceding 586. In it we have the voice of Ezekiel. The 3d, 25-27, is an editorial appendix. Vs. 25b freely copies from 16, 20, 21; and 26, 27 hark back to 3: 26, 27 and forward to 33: 21. It is the work of a late scribe who had the conviction that the whole ministry of Ezekiel was in Babylonia (cf. Introd. xlii and Com. 33: 21).

24: 1-14. THE CALDRON ON THE FIRE. This parable is not wholly clear. In places the text is very corrupt and two themes are interwoven in the symbolism. The caldron is Jerusalem; the people are the flesh. The theme alternates between the flesh boiling in the pot and the filth in the pot that cannot be cleansed even by fire. It has been suggested that 2 separate poems have been interwoven by an editor (so H. Schmidt and Heinisch). This is possible. A poem on seething the flesh, vss. 3-5, 7-8, and another on the filthy pot, vss. 9, 10, 6b, 11, 12, 6a, 13, may have gone into the editorial melting-pot and come out in the present order (Heinisch, *Das Buch Ezechiel*, 120). But it is also possible that the poet carried the two ideas side by side in his mind and turned at will from one to the other. Both are found in the text. Jerusalem is the caldron, and is so filthy from blood that even when heated red hot it is not cleansed. The inhabitants are the flesh, and hip, shoulder and bones, good and bad, all are thrown into the pot, and then dragged out, promiscuously.

The 10th month of the 9th year, on the 10th day (1), would be January, 588 B. C. (cf. Introd. xiii). This date is corroborated in 2 Kings 25: 1, and Jer. 52: 4 as the day on which the siege actually opened. It had crucial importance to prophet and people. Many armies had passed along the highway of Palestine, and a goodly number had previously laid siege to the chief city. Sheshonk of Egypt in 929, Jehaosh of Israel in 797, Pekahiah and Ramaliah in 734, and Nebuchadnezzar in 597. But none had been so ominous as this. The people may not have sensed it, as now it was an old story, but to Ezekiel that day marked the beginning of the end of an era; it was to end the chapter of national life for Israel.

it not on the ground, to cover it over
8 with dust. To stir up fury, to arouse
vengeance, I have placed her blood on
the bare rock, so that it shall not be
covered.
9 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Woe to the bloody [9] city, I myself
10 will pile high the heap, add to the wood,
kindle the fire, in order to consume the
flesh. Stir up the brew, that the bones
may be burned. Piece by piece take it
11 out, not a lot was cast for it. Then let
it stand empty on the coals, so that it
may be heated until the bronze is red-hot, that its impurity may be melted
within it, its filth be completely con-
12 sumed. (figs filth) [8] Yet much of her
13 filth goes not out of it by fire. Her
filth[9] is your impurity, lewdness.
Though I cleansed you, yet you were
not clean from your impurity. You
shall be cleansed no more until I rest
14 my fury upon you. I Yahweh have
spoken. It comes, and I do it. I will
not refrain, nor pity, nor will I repent.
According to your deeds and your acts,
I will judge you.[10] Oracle of (Lord)
Yahweh.

So important was that 10th day of the 10th month that generations later it was annually observed by fasting (Zech. 8:19).

That the day of the beginning of the siege was accurately marked, raises no serious question when we recognize what is so apparent from the general context, that Ezekiel was on the ground in person. The older hypothesis, built up on a series of scribal interpolations, that the prophet was in Babylon at this time, did present problems. To meet the needs of such a theory Ezekiel had to be placed in the class of clairvoyants. He was credited with the gift of distant sight, and a mass of strange, legendary material was accumulated to prove the occasional existence of such powers. This has always won favor with the credulous and is often considered an evidence of the manifestation of the divine. But it is curious that the bulk of such material is derived from primitive peoples and flourishes in inverse ratio to the use of critical methods. As yet, for this strange, unearthly sort of intuition there is no single case that has been verified by careful students. Happily such assumptions are no longer necessary. The prophet from personal observation could note the appearance of the army on the horizon, watch them set up their tents and arrange the bivouac, see them erect the towers, bring up the battering-rams and attack the city. His was no absentee oracle, gained by pre-radio contact with the Holy City, but he was on the ground, and it was a day of terror that chilled the blood of the religious patriot. If any day in his calendar was margined in black, that was the day.

The parable, in the form of a poem, is simple (3). The caldron is the city (3, cf. 11:1-3, 7, 11; Jer. 1:13); the pieces, bones and flesh, good and bad, are the inhabitants (4, 5). Good piece and choice bones, are probably used ironically, for the best of the people had been carried into captivity in 597 (2 Kings 24:11-16), and the prophets had a poor opinion of those left behind (Jer. 24:1-10). The kindled wood and the consuming fire (5, 9, 11, 12) piled around the caldron by Yahweh, is the army of the suzerain power. The filth or rust, that is, the incrustations on the inside of the caldron, that by long use have been burnt into the metal, are the sins of the city, the lewdness, the murders, the blood (6, 7, 13). The corruption of the inhabitants had so penetrated the material city itself, that no fire could cleanse it; complete destruction was necessary (11-13). This is an intense expression of the fact. A place—building, city—may, because of age-long associations and practices, be so reminiscent of iniquity that it can scarcely ever be purified.

Vs. 6b graphically states that nothing in the caldron has any worth. Pull out one piece after another, not a lot is cast for any of them. That is, no one will claim a piece, for all are worthless. This

15 And the word of Yahweh came to me
16 as follows: Mortal man, behold I am
about to take from you the desire of
your eyes by a stroke, but lament not,
17 nor weep, nor let your tears flow. Sigh
silently, make no death wail,[11] bind
on your turban, put your sandals on
your feet, cover not your lip, nor eat
bread of mourning.[12]

18 And I spoke to the people in the
morning. And my wife died in the
evening, and in the morning I did as
I was commanded.

19 Then the people said to me, Surely
you will tell us what these things that
20 you are doing mean for us. So I said
to them, The word of Yahweh came to
21 me as follows: Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Behold I am about to profane my
sanctuary, the pride of your strength,
the desire of your eyes and the joy of
your heart.

> Your sons and your daughters
> whom you have left behind shall fall
> by the sword.

22 Now you must do as I have done, do
not cover your lip, nor eat the bread of
23 mourning.[12] With turbans on your
heads and shoes on your feet, neither
lament nor weep. But languish because
of your sins and groan each one with
his brother.

24 So Ezekiel shall be a sign to you,
according to all that he did, you must
do when it comes. That you may
know that I am (Lord) Yahweh.

part of the vs. reads more logically at the end of 10 than here, and probably should be transferred (so Toy and Cornill).

The blood placed on the bare rock (7, 8) had never been covered, and hence was crying out for vengeance against those who were guilty (cf. Gen. 4: 10; Deut. 12: 24; Lev. 17: 13; Ezek. 20: 37). So great was the guilt there must be annihilation; there could be no pity, no repentance on the part of Yahweh (13, 14).

24: 15-24. MOURNING FOR THE FALL OF THE TEMPLE is prohibited. Some difficulties are encountered in this section. A poem lies embedded in these verses, but its reconstruction is a venture. Hölscher has lifted 2 vss. (16, 17) from the context, but his elisions are too drastic. Vss. 18, 21b, 24, however, have no adequate explanation apart from editorial revision.

My *sanctuary* (21) is the theme. That this was the *desire* of your eyes (16), the pride of your strength, the joy of your heart (21, 22), is indisputable from the parallelism of vs. 21. These poetic phrases for the temple, seem to have misled scribal interpreters. Vs. 18 comes from some one who believed the desire of your eyes, must have been the wife of the prophet. No doubt it would be a very happy and loverlike phrase for one's wife, but no doubt in this context it applies to the temple. It would be natural for a man to mourn on the occasion of the death of his helpmeet, but it was no less natural for a patriot to lament the destruction of the sanctuary. Vs. 21, like 25d, adds your sons and daughters to the general destruction. They suffered in the capitulation; but the dominant theme of this passage was my sanctuary and such additions to the original text have but weakened the message. Vs. 24 is the work of a homilist who holds Ezekiel up to us as an example. He was probably familiar with 12: 11.

The message of this section, then, was that prophet and people should not exhibit signs of mourning when the temple was destroyed (16, 17, 22, 23). The sanctuary was filthy with idolatry and blood, hence its destruction was in the interest of true religion. It was Yahweh's in name and in origin, but he had long since taken his departure from it (9: 3; 11: 22). Only the shell remained and that was permeated by lewdness and iniquity. The end of the temple was the will of God, and in this all good men must acquiesce. In reality, it was an occasion not for sorrow, but for joy, and indicated not the end of religion, but the opportunity to build more wisely and more righteously than before. In religion, as in the city, often on the ruins of old structures, more solid and more stately ones arise.

25 **And you, O mortal man, on the day when I take from them their refuge, the acme of glory, the desire of their eyes, and the exaltation of their heart, (their**
26 **sons and their daughters), on that day the fugitive will come to you, to give**
27 **you private information,[13] on that day your mouth shall be open to the fugitive, and you shall speak and be dumb no more. Thus you shall be a sign to them, that they may know that I am Yahweh.**

By a stroke, does not necessarily imply suddenly. It may be a plague that has been long at work (1 Sam. 6: 4; 2 Sam. 24: 21, 23); or war that continues its devastations for months or years (1 Sam. 4: 27; 2 Sam. 17: 9). Mourning customs were: taking off the turban and covering the head with dust and ashes (2 Sam. 1: 2; Isa. 3: 26; Josh. 7: 9), going barefoot (2 Sam. 15: 30), covering the beard with the hand (2 Sam. 15: 30; 19: 5; Jer. 14: 3), fasting (2 Sam. 3: 35), and similar signs of disfigurement and grief. All such were forbidden by the prophet. Lamenting for the ruined temple will be gratuitous, but groaning because of your own sins will be worthy (23).

24: 25-27. AN EDITORIAL APPENDIX that uses vss. 16, 20, 21, and then connects the whole section up with 3: 26, 27, and 33: 21 (cf. Introd. xlii; Com. 33: 21). It seeks to harmonize Scripture with Scripture in much the same way as do the marginal references in some modern editions of the Bible. They are valuable or misleading in proportion to the intelligence and objectivity of the editor, but should never be confused with the original.

THE SECOND MAIN DIVISION

25: 1–32: 32. Destruction of Foreign Nations.

25 : 1–32 : 32. THE NATIONS ARE CURSED. In eight chapters, oracles are launched against seven peoples, six of them petty kingdoms, with whom the fortunes of Israel were always involved: 25: 1-7, Ammon; 8-11, Moab; 12-14, Edom; 15-17, Philistia; 26: 1–28: 19, Tyre; 28: 20-26, Sidon; and the seventh, Egypt, a world power, 29: 1–32: 32.

It is significant that there is no attack on Babylonia. It has been suggested that this omission is due to the author's interest in, or presence in Babylonia. Babylon had been considered by the prophets the servant of Yahweh, and either appreciation for the work of the great empire, or fear of reprisals might have restrained the hand of the writer. While this is a possibility, it is not a weighty argument as is seen from the smashing attacks on the arrogant empire in other literature (cf. Jer. 50: 1–52: 58; Isa. 14: 3-21). Further, the chief interest of the writer centers in Tyre and Egypt, if length and literary warmth are any criteria for judgment. The other five nations lie in the immediate vicinity of Palestine, and the oracles against some of them are but space fillers. Hence it is probable that Babylonia was outside the circle of the author's interest geographically, or was no longer an important factor in world affairs.

An editor has been responsible for the selection of material and for the present arrangement. The sevenfold division is dramatic rather than discriminatory. In general it follows the pattern laid down by the editor of the book of Amos (cf. Amos 1: 3–2: 15). Grouping in sevens was popular because it embodied the idea of completeness; and because of importance and relation to Israel, the same nations would naturally take their places in the picture (cf. Jer. 46: 1–49: 39; Isa. 13: 1–19: 17).

Again, the insertion of threats against the nations, follows a well-recognized pattern in forming a buffer between the oracles of destruction of Israel and Jerusalem, and the later messages of hope and national reconstruction. After the scathing attacks on Israel they form an interlude by way of preparation for words

25:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man turn your face
against [1] the Ammonites, and proph-
3 esy against them, and say to the Am-
monites, Hear the word of (Lord) Yah-
weh, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, because
of your saying, Aha, against [1] my
sanctuary when it was defiled, and
against [1] the land of Israel when it
was desolated, and against [1] the house
of Judah when they went into captivity,
4 therefore, lo! I am about to give you
to the sons of the east as a possession,
and they shall set up their encampments
in you, and shall make their dwellings
in you. Some shall eat your fruit, and
5 others shall drink your milk. And I
will make Rabbah a pasture for camels,
and the cities [2] of Ammon a couching
place for flocks, that you may know that
I am Yahweh.
6 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Because

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of consolation. It is a happy order of material indicative of the good sense of the scribe.

Beyond the selection and the arrangement of material, internal evidence assures us that the scribe was at work. A large formal element is found in this section. Introductory and concluding formulæ, the trade-marks of the scribe, are in excess. Complaints and curses over and over again are couched in the same phraseology. Generalities are the order of the day. A lengthy excerpt, that may have been taken from the day-book of some Tyrian merchant who was active in international commerce, has been introduced without much relevancy to the question in hand. Oracles have been gleaned by the wayside, and not a few of them have the evidence of having been made to order. Colorless material and vain repetition frequently prompt us to say, a scribe hath done this.

But worth-while oracles have been preserved, and more than once we are in the presence of a poet of high distinction. With a good degree of confidence the three following, superb poems (27: 3b-9a, 25b-36; 28: 11-19; 26: 7-14) can be assigned to Ezekiel and to the period between 585-572 B. C. Critical evidence also indicates that the prophet still speaks in 29: 3b-21, and in chapters 30–32; at the same period as the above. A trade-sheet from an unknown hand and of uncertain date has been incorporated (27: 9b-25a). 28: 25, 26, a Messianic section, and 28: 1-10, the deification of Tyre, may be later than Ezekiel, while 25: 1–26: 6 and 26: 15-21 are largely, if not altogether, the hack work of scribes, some of it as late as the fifth century B. C. Details will be presented in the individual sections and in the introduction.

Chapter 25

25: 1-7. TWO ORACLES AGAINST THE AMMONITES. Author and date are uncertain. It was written sometime between 586 and 400 B. C. The ruin of the temple, the desolation of Israel, and the captivity of Judah are all in the past. This places it some time after 586. Eastern nomads were threatening Ammonite territory. A great wave of peoples from the east and south, on the move in the 5th century B. C., was reaching its climax in the 4th. This might easily be the curse the writer saw coming against Ammon, whose hatred for the Ammonite is more easily explained at this time than at any time earlier. In the earlier days the Ammonites were frequently tributary to Israel and were held in contempt by them (cf. Gen. 19: 30-38; Judges 11: 4; 1 Sam. 11: 1; 2 Sam. 10: 1-14; 12: 26-31). At the time of the fall of Jerusalem they were allies, both suffering under Babylon and both arrayed against her (2 Kings 24: 2; Ezek. 21: 20, 21; Jer. 27: 1-3). But by 400 the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites were encroaching on Judah and giving her real cause for anger and vituperation. The spirit that runs through these oracles against these petty neighboring nations fits in more adequately to what we know of the situation in or near 400 than any other period. If this be correct these five oracles against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia

you clapped your hands, and stamped your foot and rejoiced, your heart full of contempt, over[1] the land of Israel,
7 therefore, lo! I am about to stretch forth my hand against you, and give you as a spoil [3] to the nations, and cut you off from peoples, and cause you to perish from the countries. I will destroy you that you may know that I am Yahweh.

8 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Because of the saying of Moab (and Seir),[4] See! Judah has become like all the na-
9 tions, therefore, behold, I am about to expose the flank of Moab (from the cities)[5] from its border cities to the glory of the land of Beth-jeshimoth,
10 Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim, to the sons of the east, beyond the Ammonites. I will give it a possession, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among
11 the nations. Indeed, in Moab I will execute judgment that they may know that I am Yahweh.

12 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Because Edom acted vengefully against the house of Judah, and has become exceedingly guilty, and has avenged herself vi-
13 ciously,[6] therefore, thus says (Lord) Yahweh, I will stretch forth my hand against Edom, and I will cut off from her man and beast, and I will make her a desolation. From Teman to Dedan,
14 they shall fall by the sword. And I will execute my vengeance on Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do against Edom according to my anger and my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

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and Sidon, none of which has any virility, may all be the work of a scribe.

Sons of the east (4) are the Bedouin of the Arabian desert, east of Ammon. Roaming over large areas in which there was little water and hence scant supplies, these nomads were always pressing in on the cultivated lands that form the margin of the desert. Any weakness on the part of any peasant group was at once challenged by these hungry shepherds. When Jerusalem was laid in ruins and Judah desolated, the nomads from the east and south were quick to take advantage of the wider pasturelands. The conflict for possession would begin at once and local affairs would not be stable for generations. This process has been going on intermittently in that country from the beginning to the present and is likely to continue indefinitely.

Set up their encampments (4), refers to the nomad's tents, not to the tents of an army. The Bedouin usually set up their tents in a semicircle, facing east and south. So long as pasturage was good they remained, but moved on to another location as need demanded. Only very slowly did they settle down and cultivate the soil, which was slavish work that required centuries to learn.

Rabbah (5 cf. Com. 21:25) was the chief city that has been destroyed many times. Some 70 years ago it was only a lodging-place for shepherds, but now it has a population of over 5,000.

Clapping the hands, the word translated "clapping" is Aramaic, and stamping the feet, are characteristic of all Palestine dances and are very effective accompaniments of scorn.

25:8-11. AN ORACLE AGAINST MOAB. Moab's sin was that she said Judah had become like all the nations. The writer surely thought of Judah as superior to the neighboring nations. This seems to breathe the exclusive spirit of the separatist of the period of Nehemiah and Ezra. Beth-jeshimoth lay about 9 miles southeast of Jericho on the northeast end of the Dead Sea. Baal-meon lay farther south, about 8 miles from Heshbon, while Kiriathaim was situated west of Medaba. All three places were north of the Arnon River, while much of Moab's territory lay south of it. It is possible that at the time of the writer the south was no longer reckoned to Moab.

25:12-14. AN ORACLE AGAINST EDOM. Between these two people there had been perpetual feud. They were close of kin but differed greatly in type of life and in religious ideals. Israel had been the aggressor in early days and from a highly ethical point of view was blameworthy (2 Sam. 8:13, 14; cf. Gen. 27:1-29).

15 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Because the Philistines acted vengefully, and took extreme vengeance, with contempt of heart, to destroy by a perpetual enmity,
16 therefore, thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Behold I am about to stretch out my hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and will destroy the remnant of the seacoast peoples,
17 and I will execute against them an exceeding great vengeance, in chastisement of wrath, that they may know that I am Yahweh, when I execute my vengeance against them.

But later Edom turned the tables and by the end of the O. T. period Idumea (Edom) was the name for all the land of Judea. It was during those days when Edomites were gaining control of the country that Jewish writers could most appropriately write such words as this oracle.

25:15-17. AN ORACLE AGAINST THE PHILISTINES. Here conventional phrases prevail. These invaders of the thirteenth century B. C. had had some contact with Crete (cf. Deut. 2:23; Amos 9:7).

Chapter 26

26:1–28:19. ORACLES AGAINST TYRE. In these three chapters we have a collection of eight, more or less independent, prophecies that are against the city of Tyre.

Tyre means rock, and according to the Amarna tablets was well known in Egypt in the 15th century B. C. She was strategically situated on the east coast of the Mediterranean, one part of the city on the coast and the other on an island, a half-mile from shore. On the intervening channel were excellent harbors, and the citadel on the island offered a last and almost impregnable resort in time of siege. Thus literally she was in the heart of the sea.

During the history of the monarchy of Israel, she was the most celebrated of the cities of Phœnicia. Gebal (Byblos), Sidon, and Tyre, was the chronological order, not of their founding, but probably of their empire on the coast. Solomon was the partner of Hiram, king of Tyre, in great commercial endeavor (1 Kings 9:26; 10:22), and later Omri and Ahab of Samaria, formed an alliance with the royal house of Tyre, through Jezebel, much to the disapproval of local prophets (1 Kings 16:31). After long subjection to Assyria she gained independence in 630, and shortly thereafter, owing to the chaotic conditions of empire and her fortunate location, she reached the zenith of her power. Nebuchadrezzar began his famous siege in 585 and continued it until 572 when, wearied by the stubborn resistance of the island fortification, he withdrew his army and left the country (Ezek. 27:17, 18). Due to this disastrous siege Tyre was so terribly weakened that she lost her prestige in shipping on the Mediterranean, and in the world market, greatly to the profit of Sidon. The story of her reconstruction is not known in detail, but by 333 she had regained much of her importance and challenged the military genius of Alexander, and for seven months held him at bay. But by means of his sailor allies and his famous causeway he captured the island and brought to an end the ancient glory of the little city.

Between these two dates 586 and 333, so significant in the history of both Tyre and Jerusalem, the inhabitants of these 2 cities, so closely related in race, ambition and destiny, had many vital contacts. Friendships and hatreds must oft have been expressed in song and story during these centuries. Chapters 26–28 preserve probably only a tithe of such literature, much of which comes from the early days of the period. Some of it was later. When written or by whom cannot always be determined with any certainty. The collection was probably complete not earlier than 400. Each section will receive separate treatment (cf. also Introd. xliii, xliv).

26:1 And it happened in the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me as follows:
2 Mortal man because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem,

Aha, she is broken,
The gate of the nations
Has swung open to me.
I shall be filled,
She is waste.

3 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh,

Behold, O Tyre, I am against you,
And I shall bring against you many nations
As the sea brings up [1] its breakers,
4 And they shall smash the walls of Tyre,
And break down her towers.
And I shall scrape from her, her dust,
And make her a barren rock,
5 A spreading place for nets, she shall be amid the sea.
For I have spoken, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.
And she shall be a spoil for nations.
6 And her suburbs on the mainland shall be cut down by the sword.
Then they shall know that I am Yahweh.

7 For thus says (Lord) Yahweh:

Behold I am bringing against [2] Tyre, Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, from

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26:1-6. TYRE WILL BE DESTROYED because she rejoiced over the fall of Jerusalem. The date, vs. 1, which lacks the month, is redactorial. The joy of Tyre over the fall of Jerusalem would be premature in the 11th year (cf. Ezek. 33:21). At best this chronological note can be of only general value (cf. Introd. xiii, xliii).

This oracle (2) combines two poems. The 1st, vs. 2, is a Tyrian taunt song over the fall of Jerusalem. It is vigorous and poetic, and may have originated in almost any period and may have been directed against almost any city. The poem in itself could have been leveled against Sidon after her destruction in 674 for her rebellion against Assyria, or against Samaria, a former ally of Tyre, when she went down to defeat in 722, or against Jerusalem after 586. Such a poem, short, general in phrase and exultant in tone, would naturally be used on many occasions against many different groups. Jerusalem, by turns the ally and the enemy of Tyre, would very naturally be the object of violent hatred. Business men in Tyre could easily believe that the ruin of a competitor would add to their prosperity and the town-mind would revel in such a taunt as this.

Not so the Hebrew singer. He answers taunt with curse. The petty prejudices of town and race may, at least in part, have stirred him up, but there are deeper reasons for the curse than this. That petty selfishness that is ever eager to profit by disaster to others is, in the end, an economic fallacy. The destruction of goods by whatever means leaves the world the poorer. The production of goods enriches all, even the poorest. Further, that cruel spirit that delights in the ruin of others is a mental poison which insidiously undermines the finer qualities of character.

26:3-6. THE REPLY OF THE HEBREW PATRIOT, is in much the same spirit as chapter 25 and has something of the tone of late Judaism. The curse is of a very general nature, with a shading toward apocalypticism (cf. vss. 3, 5). Its literary form is a mosaic, largely indebted to earlier literature for its phrases (cf. 4 with 26:9, 14; and 5 with 26:12, 14). Hence this, the preface to the curse on Tyre, may have been one of the latest contributions to an age-long spite and may embody the convictions of the editor.

26:7-14. THE DESTRUCTION OF TYRE BY NEBUCHADREZZAR. This is a realistic picture, marked by an interest in detail such as was common in the writings of Ezekiel. It gives the impression that the writer was well acquainted with the city of Tyre, and may even have been an eye-witness of the protracted siege. Vs. 7 is prose and locates the poem some time the north, the king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a host [3] from many nations.

8 Your suburbs on the mainland,
He cuts down with the sword.
Then he builds a tower against you;
And casts up a mound around you.
He raises up against you shields.
9 The crash of his battering rams
He directs against your walls;
And your towering turrets
He hews down with his axes.
10 Because of the multitude of his horses
Their dust covers you.
Because of the noise of his horsemen,[4]
And his wheels and his chariots,
Your walls shudder as he enters your gate
Like one entering a city [5] that is breached.
11 With the hoofs of his horses
All your streets he tramples.
Your warriors he slays with the sword.
Even your strong pillars
He lays low [6] upon the ground.
12 Your wealth they spoil; your merchandise they plunder;
They break down your walls; your lovely homes they wreck;
Your stones, your timbers, your dust
They cast into the midst of the sea.
13 So I still the sound of your songs,
And the voice of your harps shall be heard nevermore.
14 For I make you a bare rock;
A place for the spreading of nets you shall be.
You shall never again be rebuilt.
For I Yahweh have spoken.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

15 Thus says the Lord Yahweh to Tyre:
Assuredly the coastlands shall tremble
at the sound of your fall, when the
wounded groan, when slaughter [7] is
16 in your midst. Then all the princes by
the sea shall descend from their thrones,
and remove their mantles, and strip off
their variegated garments, clothe themselves in loin-cloths,[8] and sit on the

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during the siege of the city by Nebuchadrezzar, possibly toward the end of the period 585-572. The spelling of the king's name with an *r* instead of the customary *n* is correct (cf. 29:18; 30:10), and argues for early authorship. King of kings (7), a title of majesty, is of ancient origin, used in the O. T. only in the post-exilic period (Ezra 7:12). The terms used to describe the siege activity, such as battering-rams, gates, horses, chariots, raising mounds, etc., are only appropriate for an attack on the mainland city, not on the island fortress. Thus, all the features of the poem point to authorship prior to 572, when the Babylonian army, having destroyed the mainland city, retired from the scene without reducing to submission the island fortress. That was not achieved until the time of Alexander, in 332.

Suburbs, or daughters in the older versions (8), refers to the outlying villages, whose occupants in time of extreme danger moved into the mother city.

The verbal forms in the Hebrew are imperfects and lend vividness to the picture. These things were going on before the eyes of the writer. The present tense adopted in the translation more closely represents the original than does the future found so frequently. The verb with the participle, *is cutting down, is casting up, is building*, would be equally expressive. The whole poem is self-explanatory, and furnishes many details of the defenses of ancient cities, as well as the methods of attack in ancient days.

26:15-18. THE AMAZEMENT OF THE PRINCES of the coastlands at the fall of Tyre. A lament over the destruction of Tyre is put into the mouths of the neighboring rulers (17b-18a, b, c) and is incorporated in a prose statement that expresses the same sentiment. All would be terrified by the coming disaster. Not only would their prosperity and security, which was linked up with the destiny of Tyre, vanish, but the undreamed-of disaster, the destruction of a great, strongly defended city, with its wealth and culture, would be a startling reality. This would shake the structure of near-by kingdoms to its very foundation.

The thought is similar to that in 27:32-35, from which the prose even bor-

ground and shake convulsively and be
17 dismayed because of you. Then shall
they take up a lament over you and say
of you:

How you have perished, vanished [9]
from the seas;
City, far-famed, whose strength was in
the sea.
She and her dwellers, their terror was
on all its inhabitants.
18 Now the coastlands are terrified
In the day of your downfall.

(Indeed the coastlands that are by the
sea were dismayed at your passing.) [10]
19 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: When
I make you a desolated city as the cities
that are not inhabited, when I bring up
over you the deep and cover you with
20 many waters, then I will send you down
with those descending to the pit, to the
people of olden time, and I will make
you dwell in the underworld, which is
like the age-old ruins, with those going
down to the pit, that you may no more
inhabit (and I will give my beauty) [11]
21 the land of the living. I will make you
an object of deathly terror, indeed you
shall not be. Though you may be
sought, you shall not be found forever.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

27:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: And you, O mortal man,
3 take up against Tyre a death-song, and
say to Tyre, the dweller by the entrance
to the sea,[1] trader among the nations
on many a coastland. Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh.

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rows some of the phraseology, princes being introduced in place of kings (cf. 27:35). The prose is evidently the work of a scribe. The elegy (17b, 18a, b, c), however, is a jewel in a poor setting. One is inclined to claim it for Ezekiel, while the context may be the work of a disciple.

26:19-21. Tyre Is Doomed to Go Down to the Pit and the city will never be rebuilt. The whole outlook is eschatological, and peculiarly reminiscent of Isa. 14:12-20. The same idea is again found in Ezek. 31:14-17 and 32:18-30. Probably we have here an early glimpse into that stream of thought that culminated in the Greco-Roman period in full-blown apocalypticism (cf. Introd. xxv, xxix, xxx).

Pit means *well* or *dungeon*, and is parallel to the lower parts of the earth, and underworld (20, cf. 31:14, 16; 32:18-21). The early Hebrew idea was that all the dead went down into Sheol, a hollowed-out place in the interior of the earth. This originated from the fact that all bodies were laid away in the grave, together with their belief that the spirit could never be absolutely and finally separated from its old home, the flesh. Hence in the time of Ezekiel, somewhere beneath the surface of the earth was the abode of the dead, while above the surface was *the land of the living* (32:23-27). It was left for later generations to perfect the idea of a vivid, personal immortality (cf. Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:1).

Chapter 27

27:1-36 brings together two quite different themes, the gallant ship Tyre goes to her doom (3b-9a, 25b-36), and Tyre enriched by her world-wide trade (9b-25a). Vss. 1-3a are introductory, 1 and 2 being a conventional superscription, while 3a, trader among the nations on many a coastland, has special reference to the prose section 9b-25a.

27:3b-9a, 25b-36. The Good Ship Tyre Goes to Her Doom, is a poem that has such detailed knowledge of the construction and manning of Tyrian ships as to suggest that the author was familiar with boat-building and with the ocean traffic of Tyre. Yet there is no good reason for not ascribing this poem to Ezekiel. The love for detail, the vividness of the picture, and the poetic movement are in keeping with what we know of him as a poet. It but widens the horizon of his interest. He is as much at home in the Phœnician shipping-world as in the Jerusalem temple. It may well have come from the time of Nebuchadrezzar's siege of Tyre 585-572. It however raises the question, did the prophet belong to Jeru-

O Tyre, you have said,
I am perfect in beauty.
4 In the heart of the seas are your borders,
Your builders have made perfect your beauty.
5 With cypress from Senir they built for you
All your beams.
Cedars [2] from Lebanon they took
To make for you masts.[3]
6 Out of oaks from Bashan
They fashioned your oars.
Your decks they made out of ivory with tashur wood [4]
From the coastland of Cyprus;
7 Fine linen with variegated stuff from Egypt
Was your sail to serve as a penon.
Blue and crimson from the coast of Elisha
Was your deck canopy.
8 The dwellers of Sidon and Arvad
Were your rowers.
Experts from Simirra [5] were with you
They were your pilots.
9 The elders of Gebal and her skilled men were with you
Repairing your fissures.

All ships of the sea with their sailors were in you
To transport your wares.

10 Persia and Lud and Put were in your army, soldiers for your battles; the shield and helmet, they hung up in you.

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salem or was he a native of the north? Did he at any time reside in Tyre, or in one of the neighboring villages? At any rate it shows him more than an impractical ecclesiast. He had at least a hobby that gave him a world outlook (cf. Introd. xxi).

Tyre is personified as a ship in this poem. Yet behind the fine description there lies a serious charge. Tyre gloried in her material prosperity, felt secure and used all nations for her own ends. Now she is to be destroyed forever. Probably it is too subtle to interpret 3b where she boasts of her beauty as an indication of rebellion against Babylon, her overlord. Babylon however is the agent for her punishment (26).

Senir, the Amorite name for Hermon, the highest peak in the Anti-Lebanon range, rising over 9,000 feet above sea-level, is probably used here for the range in general. Lebanon is the range of mountains lying close to the coast, far-famed for its cedars. Bashan, the district to the east of lake Galilee, was noted for its oak forests, its fat cattle, and later for its wheat. Tashur wood may be a variety of cypress. Elishah (Gen. 10: 4) is possibly Carthage which, according to tradition, was founded by Elissa and was famous for purple dye. Others identify it with Greek colonies on the south of Italy and in Sicily, while in the Tel-el-Amarna letters Alashia or Alsa is identified with Cyprus. Sidon is situated on the Mediterranean coast some 14 miles north of Tyre, while Arvad, the modern Ruad, lies to the north of Tripoli. Simirra, mentioned in the Tel-el-Amarna letters is a short distance above Arvad. Gebal, ancient Byblos, modern Jubeil, lies about 20 miles north of Beirut.

According to this description, the good ship Tyre is constructed from the finest and the strongest material known to the building trade, and experts from every port become her henchmen and her sailors. Herein is the glory of Tyre.

27: 9b-25a. Tyre Is Enriched by Her Trade with foreigners (9b, 12-25a), and defended by foreign soldiers (10, 11). The poem (3b-9a, 25b-36) is split in two by this tedious prose narrative, that has two distinct themes, that probably indicate different sources. Vs. 9b is the introduction to 12-25a, while 10, 11 looks like a late insertion. The former is a well-arranged summary of the daily activities in the business quarters of Tyre. Behind it lies accurate information, derived either from invoices of the chamber of commerce or from long and keen observation of the city market.

The place-names, in some cases even the order, have marked similarities to the

11 These gave you glory. The sons of
Arvard and Helech manned your walls
round about, and Gomerim [6] were in
your towers; their shields were hung on
your walls round about, making perfect
your beauty.
12 Tartessus traded with you because of
the abundance of all kinds of wealth.
In exchange for silver they furnished
13 you wares, iron, tin and lead. Yavan,
Tubal and Meshek traded with you.
Slaves and bronze vessels they exchanged
14 for your wares. From Togarmah, horses
and horsemen and mules they ex-
15 changed for your wares. The men from
Rhodes [7] traded with you. Many
coastlands were in your employ.[8]
Elephant tusks and ebony they sent back
16 as your tribute. Edom [9] traded with
you because of the abundance of your
products; in exchange for your wares
they gave you carbuncles, purple, and
variegated stuff, and linen, corals and
17 rubies. Judah and the land of Israel,
they traded with you; for your mer-
chandise they gave wheat [10] of Minnith
and wax,[11] and honey and oil and
18 balm. Damascus traded with you be-
cause of the abundance of your prod-
ucts, because of the abundance of all
kinds of wealth; they gave the wine of
Helbon, and white wool in exchange
19 for your wares. (And Dan and Ya-
van).[12] From Uzzal in exchange for
your wares came forged iron, cassia,
20 and sweet cane. Dedan traded with you

list in Gen. 10: 2-7, though we need not conjecture that one borrowed from the other. The sequence of nations is orderly, with Tyre as the center. A group of 6 lies to the west (12-14), 5 are on the east (15-18), 6 are in the far south (19-22), and 5 are on the frontiers of the northeast (23-25a). Yet, when all possible has been said concerning accuracy and order, it still remains the work of a hack. It is an excellent report for the board of trade of Tyre, for which Ezekiel should not be held responsible. His speech often fell short of the poetic, but his interest in religion never faltered. This is a trade-sheet, Tyrian in interest, and possibly in origin; and should we conclude that, because of similarity of theme, a Jewish scribe inserted this page from the pen of a native Tyrian in Ezekiel's poem on Tyre we might not be far from the truth. As for the date it surely came from the heyday of the glory of Tyre, either 900-684 or 500-333, most probably during the latter period.

27: 10, 11. Tyre Is Defended By Foreign Soldiers. Persian soldiers are in her armies. While this is the earliest reference in the O. T. to Persia (cf. 38: 5), that would not necessarily prove lateness of date. As early as 640 Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, records that Arukku the son of Cyrus, king of Parsumas, brought him tribute. Knowing the cross-currents of international life from early days, it would occasion no surprise if mercenary soldiers from Persia should have wandered as far east as Phœnicia at an even earlier date. Naturally after the Persians were driven out of Europe in 479 many of their soldiers hired out to the local princes.

Lud and Put probably belong to the same general region in the far south from Tyre. Lud (cf. Gen. 10: 3)—found in the singular here, in 30: 5, and in Isa. in 66: 19; in the plural in Gen. 10: 13; 1 Chron. 1: 11; and Jer. 46: 9—is regularly associated with Egypt. It may be the name of a people in south Arabia, between Persia and Ethiopia as Persia, Lud and Put are frequently found together. Lud or Lydia in northwest Asia Minor seems to be out of the way and the textual change to Lub or Lybia, the well-known race in the north of Africa, may not be necessary.

Put (Gen. 10: 6; 1 Chron. 1: 8; Ezek. 30: 5; 38: 5) is by some taken to be Punt, Egyptian Pwone, located on the African coast of the Red Sea. Others consider it the equivalent of Piat, an Egyptian name for Lybia. Probably these three peoples (10), were in the south, Persia, south Arabia, and Ethiopia.

Arvad, Helech and Gomerim, the 2d group, belong to the far north. Arvad (Gen. 10: 8) the modern Ruad (1 Mac.

21 saddle-cloths for riding. Arabia and all
the princes of Kedar were in your employ,
trading with you lambs, and rams,
22 and goats. (Traders of)[13] Sheba
and Raamah traded with you. The best
of all balsam and every kind of precious
stone, and gold they exchanged for your
23 wares. Harran and Canneh and Eden
traded with you.[14] Ashur and all
24 Media [15] traded with you. These
were your traders, bringing in trade
beautiful garments, purple mantles and
variegated stuff, with chests of colored
cloth bound with strong twisted cords.
25 Ships of Tartessus served [6] you for
your wares.

So you were filled and loaded down
In the midst of the sea.
26 Into deep waters
Your rowers brought you.
The east wind shattered you
In the midst of the seas.
27 Your wealth and your wares, your merchandise,
Your sailors and your pilots,
The repairers of your fissures,
The handlers of your wares,
And all your men of war,
Those within you, even all your company,
They sink into the depth of the sea
In the day of your downfall.

12: 53) was built some 70 miles north of Beirut, and was the most important Phœnician city in the north. Helech, though usually translated "your army," is certainly a place-name, and is the ancient Cilicia in the southeast corner of Asia Minor. Gomerim (38: 6; Gen. 10: 2, 3; 1 Chron. 1: 5), the Gimmirai of the Assyrians, the Cimmerians of the Greeks, is a district in mideastern Asia Minor, lying north of Armenia.

Such was the glory of Tyre that 2 groups, one in the far south and the other in the far north supplied the soldiers for her army.

27: 12-25a. FOREIGN TRADE ENRICHED TYRE. World-wide trade relations are here tabulated. The scribe had either an ancient road map before him or had in mind a remarkably clear outline of world geography.

Tartessus, in the far west, beyond the pillars of Hercules, is the starting-point of the itinerary. Following round the north shore of the Mediterranean we come to Yavan or Ionia, the land of the Greeks (Gen. 10: 2, 4; Zech. 9: 13; Dan. 8: 24), and then pass on to Tubal (Gen. 10: 2; Ezek. 32: 26; 38: 2, 3; 39: 1), the Tabarner of the Assyrian inscriptions, which extends from the southeast of the Black Sea westward to Cilicia. Meshek (Gen. 10: 2; Ezek. 32: 26; 38: 2, 3; 39: 1) to the northwest of Cilicia comes next, and then Togarmah (Gen. 10: 3; 1 Chron. 1: 6) approximately southwest Armenia. Rhodes (Gen. 10: 4; 1 Chron. 1: 17) following a slight but essential emendation, the well-known island on the southwest corner of Asia Minor concludes the survey on the west, and because of her maritime connections between the east and west, most happily introduces a group of cities on the east.

Edom's commerce is reviewed and then we are led through Judah and Israel to Damascus. Helbon, in the mountains 12 miles north of Damascus, famed in the court of Assyria for the flavor of her wines, sends a quota of her best for the nobles of Tyre.

Then the far south is laid under tribute. Uzzal (Gen. 10: 27; 1 Chron. 1: 21) is an ancient name for the city of San'à, the capital of Yemen. This is one of the great cities of southwest Arabia, and is still noted for its ironwork, its swords, and dagger blades. Dedan (Gen. 10: 7; 1 Chron. 1: 9) is the name of an Arabian people, related to the Cushites, and situated somewhere south of Edom (25: 13; Gen. 25: 3; Jer. 25: 23; 49: 8; Isa. 21: 13). Arabia may be a general term for Arabia Deserta, or it may refer to some special group living therein. Kedar (Jer. 2: 10; 49: 28) stands for the great nomadic tribes living to the east of Palestine and moving over great areas of the desert. Sheba (Gen. 10: 7, 28; 1 Chron. 1: 9), the habitat of the Sabeans in southwest Arabia, where there was a strong empire and a well-developed com-

28 At the sound of your pilots' shriek
The open spaces tremble,
29 And all leap down from their ships,
The rowers and the sailors,
All the pilots of the sea,
They stand upon the shore,
30 They shout aloud against you,
And cry out bitterly,
And heap dust upon their heads,
And wallow in the ashes.
31 They shave their heads because [17] of you
And gird on sackcloth,
And wail over you [17] with bitter spirit,
Bitterly lamenting.
32 Their children too, take up a dirge against you [17]
Wailing the death-song over you.

Who has been like Tyre!
Destroyed [18] in the depths of the sea!
33 When your wares came forth from the sea
You sated many a nation.
With the abundance of your wealth and your merchandise
You enriched the kings of the earth.
34 Now [19] you are smashed by the sea,
In the depth of the waters
Your wares and all your company
Have gone down in your midst.

35 All who inhabit the coastlands
Are astonished at you,
And their kings shudder,
Their faces are convulsed.
Traders among the nations are shocked at you
You have become a deadly terror,
Never more will you be.

merce in spices and precious stones long before the reign of Solomon, and Raamah (Gen. 10:7; 1 Chron. 1:9), Regma of the Greeks, that lay in the vicinity of Sheba complete the important trade-posts in the south.

The last division is found in the far north, east of Tyre. Haran (Gen. 11:31, 32; 24:10; 27:43) in northern Mesopotamia, some 30 miles southeast of Edessa, on one of the chief caravan lines between Babylonia and the Mediterranean, sent her wares to Tyre. Canneh was probably Calneh (Gen. 10:10) a city located north of Babylon. Some, however, consider it a scribal error for *bene*, Hebrew for *sons of*, and read sons of Eden. This tribe has been located in the upper Euphrates valley, east of Aleppo, about 100 miles north of Baalbeck. Ashur is Assyria, and Media lies still farther east.

Thus we have boxed the compass. This trade-sheet, the most important in existence for ancient world commerce, cannot here be studied in detail (cf. F. C. Movers. *Die Phönizier.* 2 Band. 3. Teil, for a competent treatment). However, it places Tyre in the center of the stage. The products from the west, the south, the north and the east, here so accurately listed, are all poured into her lap for her enrichment. Such is the picture preserved to us from the pen of some unknown lover of ancient Tyre.

27:25b-36. THE GOOD SHIP TYRE IS WRECKED. This is part of the poem on Tyre and originally immediately followed 3b-9a. The destruction of the proud and beautiful city is graphically described in allegory. An east wind, Nebuchadrezzar and the Babylonian army, shattered you in the midst of the sea (26, 34). Here the verbal form, shattered you, is perfect, and indicates the certainty of the prophet. To him the result of the siege that began in 585 was so certain that he speaks of it as an accomplished fact. Such would have been the judgment of every wise man in that day. That Tyre should be able to hold out against the might of Babylon under Nebuchadrezzar, the victor over Assyria and Egypt and the captor of Jerusalem, was beyond the pale of good judgment. But the impossible does happen sometimes, and the verdict of history is recorded in Ezek. 29:17-20.

Chapter 28

28:1-26 is composite, including four independent sections: 1-10, Tyre, cursed for self-deification, from all the evidence is secondary, written some time between 538 and 333; 11-19, a fragment of Tyrian mythology asserting the divine origin and

28:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, speak to the
prince of Tyre, thus says (Lord) Yahweh:

Because your heart is haughty,
And you said, I am a God,
In the seat of God I am sitting
In the midst of the seas.
But you are a man and not a God,
Though your desire is as the desire of a God.

3 Are you wiser [1] than Daniel?
And is nothing concealed from you?
4 In your wisdom and shrewdness
You have accumulated for yourself wealth
And have gathered [2] gold and silver
In your treasuries.
5 By your great wisdom, by your trading,
You have increased your wealth.
And now your heart is haughty

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dignity of the Phœnician city (12b-15) is followed by the prophetic curse because of her sin (16-19)—There is every reason to ascribe this to Ezekiel about 580—; 20-23, Sidon, cursed in pious phrases gleaned from the prophets, but without any specified reason, is secondary; 24-26, two Messianic oracles, proclaiming the return of a united Israel (25, 26) freed from all unhappy environment (24) are post-exilic, and belong to an important type of literature of which chapter 34 forms a part.

28:1-10. THE PRINCE OF TYRE, SELF-DEIFIED BECAUSE OF PROSPERITY, at the hand of strangers will die the death of the uncircumcised.

The phraseology is disjointed (7b, 8, 9b), and the sentence structure sadly mixed. Vss. 3, 4, note the introductory particles in Hebrew, are loosely connected with the context, and but repeat, with loss of vigor, what precedes and follows. They read like the explanatory note of a garrulous scribe. The term *prince* (2), precludes Ithobaal II, who was king of Tyre during the siege of Nebuchadrezzar from 585 to 572 B. C. After the raising of the siege, the official title of the Tyrian ruler for some time was judge not king. In the vocabulary, such a word as pit is used only in the later literature, (cf. Prov. 28:17; 28:10; 30:4; Isa. 14:15; 38:17 and Ezek. 26:20; 32:18, 23, 25) and points to a post-exilic date. Note also that the sin, self-deification, has a theological interest and suggests authorship during some period other than the siege. Haughtiness of heart also is attacked only in late literature (cf. Ps. 131:1; Prov. 18:12; 2 Chron. 26:16; 32:25; Ezek. 28:2, 5, 17). The earlier accusations were gloating over Judah (25:1–26:6) and self-satisfaction owing to prosperity (27:3b-9a, 25b-36). While this paragraph widely diverges in both language and thought from 25:1–26:6, which is secondary material, it has definite affinities with 27:3b-9a. Critical students, not without plausibility, have suggested that vss. 1-10 are a scribal interpretation of 28:11-19 (Hölscher 142). This would account for the similarities with 27:3b-9a, and place it some time later than 570, a date to which so many other features point. As Tyre could scarcely have recovered from the ruinous Babylonian siege before the time of the Persian conquest, 538, we would scarcely expect any scribe so to write about a city in ruins. But by 333, when Alexander the Great marched down the Phœnician coast, Tyre had regained both trade and prestige. Thus this indictment against her may have been penned almost any time between 538 and 333, by some unnamed scribe who was familiar with the lingo of his predecessors. It might even have originated in the Greek period when Judaism was outraged by a ruler who claimed divine honors.

I am a god (2), such self-deification was common among ancient rulers. In Egypt, as early as the 3rd dynasty, in 2,980, Zozer, one of the greatest of their rulers was deified and acclaimed as Great God. In most other nations the same

Because of your wealth.
6 Therefore thus says (Lord) Yahweh:
Because your desire has become like the desire of a God
7 Therefore I am bringing against you strangers,
The most savage of nations,
And they shall unsheath their swords against [3] your wisdom,
And shall defile your fairness.
8 To the pit they shall thrust you
And you shall die (the dyings of the slain) [4]
In the midst of the seas.
9 Will you still say, I am a God
In the presence of your slayer?
But you are a man and not a God,
In the power of those slaying you.
10 The death of the uncircumcised you shall die
By the hand of strangers.
For I have spoken.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

11 And the word of Yahweh came to me
12 as follows: Mortal man, take up a dirge
against the king of Tyre and say to him,
Thus says (Lord) Yahweh:

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tendency has been observed. At the beginning of the Greek period, Alexander had his divine paternity amply attested by the oracle of Siwa. Anointing, either in state or church, is but a veiled assumption of a transmission of divine power; and the divine right of kings is but a vestigial remnant of the same thing, and is but a primitive, prescientific explanation of the superman. But the Jew would have none of it, for his lofty conception of Deity made such an idea unthinkable.

The seat of God in the midst of the seas (2), may only superficially refer to the geographic location of Tyre. In local mythology, as recently revealed in the Ras Shamra tablets, the sea was the dwelling-place of the goddess, who is constantly called "Lady Ashera of the sea" (Jack 25). The lore of many peoples has expressed the belief that the sea was the home of the gods, and this expression is very appropriate when used of Tyre.

Daniel (3), here and elsewhere, was the unraveler of secrets (cf. Ezek. 14:14-20).

Strangers, the most savage of nations (7), is used of the Babylonian army when on its march against Egypt (31:12; 32:12; cf. 30:11 and Isa. 13:11). Such a phrase might be applied to any conquering army and once used would be a boon to the scribe.

The pit (8), reminds one of Isa. 14:13-15, and Ezek. 31:14, and like Sheol is the abode of all the departed, apparently without discrimination. Here Tyre will be in the presence of her slayer (9), a constant reminder of her humiliating defeat. Death by the sword, or in any unnatural way, or at the hand of strangers, was considered final evidence of terrible guilt on the part of the dead, hence terrible punishment was well deserved. The death of the uncircumcised was the most terrible that the Jewish writer could conjure up. In the early days this was an epithet applied to the Philistines (1 Sam. 14:6; 17:26; 31:4), later it was charged with contempt and loathing (Ezek. 31:18; 32:12; 44:7, 9), akin to vulgar, racial epithets.

28:11-19. TYRE IS DRIVEN OUT OF THE GARDEN OF THE GODS, is a fragment of Tyrian mythology. Vss. 11, 12a are the usual editorial introduction. Vss. 12b-15 a mythological remnant, celebrating the divine origin and dignity of Tyre, has been worked over by the prophet. Vss. 16-19, the curse of Yahweh on Tyre because of arrogance due to wealth.

Vss. 12b-19, gives us a peep into Phœnician mythology. From this we are able to glean some general facts, though neither from this nor any other source, can we gain detailed information of the primitive theology of this people. However, this and the Genesis story (Gen. 3:1-24), in which there are so many similarities, are mutually helpful for interpretation.

The city of Tyre is personified, and her origins are glorified. Indeed, so glowing is the picture of the beginnings of Tyre

You were the stamp of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
13 In Eden, garden of the gods you were.
Every precious stone was for your decoration;
Carnelian, topaz, and diamond,
Tarshish, onyx, and jasper,
Sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle;
And gold was the workmanship of your sockets and grooves.
In the day you were created, they were set up.
14 I placed you with [5] the cherub,
The anointed one, covering you.
You were in the sacred mountain of God;
In the midst of the fiery stones you walked.
15 Perfect were you in your ways,
From the day of your creation,
Until iniquity was found in you.

16 Through the greatness of your merchandise they filled your midst with violence and you have sinned. So I have profaned you, casting you out from the mountain of God. And the cherub,

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that one might think of her as preexistent. At least, it goes so far as to claim that this glorious city was founded by the gods and that her beginning lay far back in the golden age. Similar traditions have been prevalent about the origins of many cities and of many peoples, and such folklore often flourishes in inverse ratio to the actual accomplishment of a people. It is compensatory.

While the scribal formula speaks of the king of Tyre (12), nothing in 12b-15 suggests such a personification. Either the chief priest or the president of the chamber of commerce, would more accurately fit into the context. In fact, personification is only an expedient and should not be pressed too rigidly. In the curse that follows, the prophet easily slips back into those phrases that are applicable only to a city.

You were the *stamp of perfection*, or as Hermann has rendered it, *Du warst der Siegelabdruck des Ebenbildes*. You were a stamped impress of a model, is only a variation, lacking something of the glamor of the idea that man was made in the image of God (Gen. 1: 27). Another reading, with a slight textual change, is You were the bridegroom of Tanith (Smith 75), which would be in full accord with what we know of Phœnician mythology. Tanith, equivalent to Astarte, was the chief Tyrian goddess, and such a translation, if warranted, leads us right into the heart of Phœnician religion, where the fertility cult was central. In some respects, this then would match the Adam and Eve story of Genesis, which, however, has been largely freed from the mythological elements. But probably such an interpretation fits into the paragraph a little too easily.

Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (12b) flashes before us as swift and perfect a picture as that of Job 1: 1.

In Eden, garden of the gods, we have the same concept as that found in Babylonian mythology and in Gen. 2: 8-17 (cf. Ezek. 31: 8, 9, 16, 18; 36: 35). Eden is probably derived from the Babylonian *edinu*, meaning plain. The Hebrew in its Genesis story has preserved this idea, and the garden of Eden lies in the Tigris-Euphrates valley surrounded by streams (Gen. 2: 8-14). Here it was in the holy mountain, without any other landmarks. For the Hebrews it was eastward (Gen. 2: 8). To the people of Ras Shamra as to many others it lay in the north (Jack 20). Naturally enough religious centers moved from time to time and theology had to keep pace with history. Israel's holy mountain was Sinai or Horeb, as the case might be, and in later history Jerusalem took precedence.

One can only wonder where the holy mountain of the Tyrian people was located. Did it lie in the north at some *Mont Cassius*, as with the worshipers of Ras Shamra? Or might it be in the far south at Sinai, where some of their ancestors, along with the Israelites, may have heard voices and seen visions? Or did it lie closer at hand in thought and vision? Was it Carmel, and Gerizim,

the covering one, destroyed you from
17 the fiery stones. Your heart was haughty because of your beauty. Your wisdom was corrupted because of your fairness. I have thrust you down to the ground. Before kings I have set you
18 that they may gloat [6] over you. By the greatness of your iniquities, by the injustice of your merchandise, you have defiled your sanctuaries. Therefore I brought fire out of the midst of you, which has consumed you. I have made

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long a sacred mountain, out of which they had been driven but a few centuries ago? These places they had occupied long before the wild-eyed Elijah had challenged their devotions. For more than a millennium the well-watered plains, east and west and north of Gerizim, must have enriched the trader of the seaport town. His friends were in the quiet villages and ofttimes his properties were found throughout the valleys. Many of his ancestors had come from these hamlets and their earliest worship had been on these hillsides. Their deities were native to Gerizim and Carmel and to many of them Samaria had been their Eden. It is not a wild hazard to imagine that wherever their primitive Eden may have been located, in a later orientation there were probably those who were dreaming of Gerizim or Carmel as their holy mountain, and the rich fields of Samaria out of which they had been ousted by the bloody Jehu as the garden of Eden (cf. Montgomery. *The Samaritans*, 17, 238).

Every precious stone was for your decoration (13), is illustrative not only of her wealth and beauty but of her divine power. 9 stones are found in this list, and it should be noted that these 9 stones are all found in the breastplate of the high priest, in which there were twelve (Exod. 28:17-19; 39:10-13). The similarity of the two groups so impressed the Septuagint translators of Ezekiel that they gave to Tyre the full quota of 12, following the text of Exod. 28:17-19. Of equal interest is the fact that the breastplate of an Assyrian incantation priest had 8 similar stones (Schoff, *The Ship Tyre*, 116).

While we think of precious stones chiefly in terms of value and beauty, the ancients believed they had magical qualities that brought the possessor good or ill fortunes. They warded off diseases, disasters, curses, and death; while prosperity, love, and fertility were assured to the possessor. Such values attributed to gems naturally varied from time to time and from group to group. Such ideas originated because of some peculiarity of form, color, or texture of the individual stone. In experience it was noticed that the possessor had, or seemed to have, good or bad luck. Then the stone became a talisman and in the process of time a philosophy was developed. Ultimately each one of the stones was believed to derive its peculiar virtue from deity and in Babylonia each one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac had its own special stone, and its wearer was assured of good fortune (cf. Testament of Levi viii:2, 3). Our birth-stone lore is a remnant of what was once a very wide-spread superstition (cf. Schoff, *Ship of Tyre*, 116-137). Tyre, according to this picture, was in the beginning girded with all the symbols of divine protection. The same thought of wealth, and beauty, and divine protection is found in the promise of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:18-21).

I placed you with the anointed cherub, the covering one (14), has kinship with the Genesis story (Gen. 3:24). Like Adam, Tyre too, had direct contact with beings of a higher order. The function of the cherub is not stated in this passage. Did it guard some sacred object that was taboo to mankind?

In the midst of the fiery stones you walked to and fro (14), to us is cryptic, but it seems to indicate that Tyre, in the beginning, had some glory or some religious function, the nature of which cannot be imagined. Was Tyre destined to be a high priest in affairs religious to

you as ashes on the earth before the
19 eyes of all looking at you. All among
the nations who know you are amazed
because of you. You are a deathly
terror, lost forever.
20 And the word of Yahweh came to me
21 as follows: Mortal man, turn your face
against Sidon and prophesy against her
22 and say, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh:

Behold, I am against you, O Sidon,
And will glorify myself in your midst.
And they shall know that I am
Yahweh
When I execute judgments in her,
And sanctify myself in her.
23 For I am sending against her
Plague and blood in her streets.
The wounded shall fall in her midst

the Almighty? Among the nations might she have been a leader like Moses? Probably so. Her opportunities of becoming the Holy City of the world would seem to have been as good as those of Jerusalem, but selfish interests in commerce dimmed her vision to abiding realities. She might have been the herald of religion; she became the pawn of the market-place.

The similarities between this piece of mythology and parts of Genesis need not surprise us. The two peoples, Phœnician and Hebrew, in large part, belonged to the same stock. They spoke dialects of the same language and their histories were in large measure parallel. Next-door neighbors, with back yards adjoining, they visited back and forth; their children intermarried; their religions differed no more widely than do branches of modern Christianity; their traditions must have been remarkably alike.

28:16-19. THE PROPHET'S CURSE ON TYRE. The cherub, the covering one destroyed you (16). This translation, slightly changes some of the vowel points, while the A.V. "And I have destroyed thee, O covering cherub," has tampered with the consonants. For such a change there is no support, and neither here nor in vs. 14, the kindred phrase, does the authorized version give any sense. The new translation parallels the Genesis story in which the cherubim or the cherub was an active agent in the expulsion of Adam from the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:14). In the O. T. story apple-eating was the cause of the downfall, which is still in the area of mythology, for we must find the meaning of the apple. In the Phœnician story the blinding lust for profit was the guilt and the downfall of the highly favored city. Here we have a critical judgment in the realm of business ethics.

In this, we have gone a long distance from the Elijah-Baal controversy in the days of Omri-Ahab (1 Kings 18:1-46). There, Tyrian-Baalism must perish root and branch because of false worship. Here, Tyre has sold her birthright for the baubles of big business. There, her religion was taboo. Here, her shrewd practices and growing arrogance are her downfall. Merchandise had led to violence (16); life had been secularized and religion had deteriorated; arrogance had developed; wisdom had become beclouded and neighboring cities had lost their respect for her. On the down grade, to the amazement of all, she would be destroyed.

The prophet was no narrow nationalist. Tyre as well as Jerusalem came within his provenience. Nor did his interest in religion silence him in affairs of business. He believed the short-sighted economic practices of Tyre must be radically punished by a God of Justice. He saw clearly that national decadence and international ill will were probably more deeply rooted in economic causes than in any other.

This oracle is generally accepted as by Ezekiel and was delivered some time about 580, or at least before 572.

28:20-23. SIDON IS DOOMED. This threat is only a space-filler to round out the number to seven. Preceding the 1st millennium B. C. the influence of Sidon far surpassed that of Tyre, but by 890, owing to external and internal factors the leadership of the coast was reversed. In 675 Esarhaddon, the Assyrian king,

By the sword that is against her on every side,
And they shall know that I am Yahweh.

24 And there shall never again be to the house of Israel a scratching brier or a festering thorn from those despising them round about them. And they shall know that I am (Lord) Yahweh.
25 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, then I will be sanctified in them before the eyes of the nations. And they shall dwell in their own land, which I gave to
26 my servant, to Jacob. And they shall dwell there in safety, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and dwell in safety, when I execute judgments on all who despise them round about them. And they shall know that I am Yahweh their God.

29:1 In the tenth year, on the twelfth day of the tenth month, the word of Yahweh came to me as follows:
2 Mortal man, turn your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt,

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punished her for rebellion, but after 570 she regained leadership over Tyre and during the Persian period remained the chief city in the Persian league. But these verses do not favor us with any glimpse of the city's activity.

28:24-26. SALVATION IS ASSURED A UNITED ISRAEL. The main promise is preceded by a brief but vivid oracle (vs. 24), which is quite independent. All irritations and festering sores due to hostile or unsympathetic neighboring peoples will pass away forever. This is one phase of the Messianic hope.

25, 26 is the promise that all shall be gathered out from the nations where they are dispersed. Thus when Yahweh executes judgment on those who despise them, he will be honored among the nations. In their homeland they shall dwell in peace and plenty, a hope expressed more completely in 34:25-31, to which this would be a suitable appendix.

Chapter 29

29:1–32:32. THE ORACLES AGAINST EGYPT. In these 4 chapters are gathered 7 main collections. (1) 29:1-16; (2) 29:17-21; (3) 30:1-19; (4) 30:20-26; (5) 31:1-18; (6) 32:1-16; (7) 32:17-32, most of which are aggregations of smaller units. Dates are attached to all save the 3rd, 30:1-19. Three (1, 4, 5) fall within the period of the last siege of Jerusalem 587–586 B. C.; two (6, 7) are dated in the ensuing year; while 2 is assigned to 572. Probably 3 comes from a later period. So far as phrases reveal history these dates are warranted for parts of the main sections; and style and content support the implied authorship for the same oracles.

Minor passages within each bear the marks of editorial accretions, or of later authorship. The dates, reliable on the whole, are the work of an historian (cf. Introd. xii–xviii). A few oracles born of a new situation (29:13-16; 30:13-19), a number of interpolated interpretations (30:10-12; 30:25, 26; 32:17); and some pious contributions (29:21; 32:15, 16) are the interesting side-lights contributed by a succession of zealous scribes.

29:1-16. EGYPT IS DOOMED. In this, the 1st division, there are 5 sections. The editorial superscription, 1-3a, dated January, 587, is valid for 3 oracles; Pharaoh, a sea-monster, 3b-6a, because of his pride will be hooked and cast on the land to die, by Yahweh; Egypt is a broken reed, 6b-9a, therefore the land will be ravished; Egypt is arrogant, 9b-12, and will be desolated and dispersed. These come from Ezekiel in 587. Vss. 13-16, Egyptians will be restored to their country and will be segregated in Upper Egypt, only superficially related to the preceding oracle, by the term forty years (11, 12, 13), is later and supplementary. It may be as late as the time of Cambyses 528–525.

3 (speak) [1] and say, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh: Behold I am against you
Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great sea
monster [2] lying in the midst of his
river,[3] who has said, My river is my
4 own, even I, myself made it.[4] Therefore
I will put hooks in your jaws, and
I will make the fish of your river [3]
stick to your scales, and I will pull you
up from the midst of your river [3] with
all the fish of the river sticking to
5 your scales, and I will throw you
out into the wilderness, you and all the
fish of your river.[3] On the open
field you shall fall; you shall neither
be gathered up nor buried.[5] To the
beasts of the field and the birds of the
heavens, I have given you for food.
6a Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall
know that I am Yahweh.
6b Because you were [6] a rush-like
7 staff to the house of Israel,—when they
took hold of you, you splintered in their
hand,[7] and laid open the whole shoulder,
and when they leaned on you, you
broke and made every thigh to

29: 1-3a. THE DATE IN THE HEBREW TEXT gives us near the beginning of January, 587, some 7 months before the fall of Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kings 25: 2, 8). The Septuagint makes it the 12th year, which would be 585. As the date is editorial, internal evidence alone can aid us in our preference. One of the most likely occasions for such an outburst would be during the siege of Jerusalem, when the activities of the Egyptian party and Pharaoh's response thereto were particularly distressing to the prophets (cf. Jer. 37: 7-11). Her interference in local affairs, the bankruptcy of her performance during the past 4 centuries, her native arrogance, and above all her opposition to Nebuchadrezzar, whom some prophets believed to be the servant of Yahweh, the agent of a divine plan in history, were factors that must have nourished a strong anti-Egyptian feeling in Jerusalem. In such a situation prophets could not keep silent (cf. Jer. 46: 2-26). Parts of this booklet echo this spirit of nationalism.

29: 3b-6a. PHARAOH, THE SEA-MONSTER SLAIN. Pharaoh, meaning *great house*, is here unnamed, so detailed information must be found in the text, if possible. If the date is accurate, Pharaoh Hophra, the 4th ruler of the 26th Egyptian dynasty was on the throne (cf. Jer. 37: 5-11). While the dynasty was Saitic, originating in the city of Sais in the Delta, by conquest, and later by marriage to the outsider, it was at least semi-Ethiopian. The rulers were strong men, and there was a promise of the ancient glory of Egypt again dazzling the world. But on the outside, great nations were rising and falling like the waves of the ocean. Internally, local princes eager for prestige, mercenary soldiers thirsting for power, ancient grudges and new-born ambitions, all conspired to destroy the foundations of empire. The days of Hophra were troublous indeed (588–569); and his successor, Amasis, after an outburst of splendor, witnessed the crumbling of a great empire under the invasion of the Persian Cambyses (528-525).

The great sea-monster (3) in this allegory, as opposed to 32: 2, seems to be the crocodile. This reptile was so common in the Nile that it had become almost, if not quite, a symbol of the nation, and occupied a prominent place among the Egyptian gods (32: 2; Ps. 74: 13). In the time of Augustus the crocodile was actually stamped on the Egyptian coins. But in this allegory we have a cartoon in words, and the great sea-monster is used in such a way that it borders on mythology. It is the embodiment of a spirit indicating in an extreme way certain characteristics of Egypt. The bear for Russia, the lion for Britain, and the eagle for the United States of America, serve the same purpose. The crocodile suggests something stupid, nefarious, inhuman.

In the midst of his river, refers to the Nile which is the text of the Septuagint (vss. 3, 4, 5), and is to be preferred to the Hebrew text, where the plural is

8 quake [8]—, therefore thus says (Lord)
Yahweh: Behold I am just about to
bring against you a sword, and I will
9a cut off from you man and beast, and
the land of Egypt shall be a desolation
and a waste. Then they shall know
that I am Yahweh.
9b Because you said,[9] The river is
10 mine, and I myself made it,[4] therefore,
see! I am against [10] you and
against your river,[3] and I will make
the land an utter waste, a desolation [11]
from Migdol to Assuan, even to the
11 border of Ethiopia, and no foot of man
shall pass through it. The foot of beast
shall not pass over it, nor shall it be
12 inhabited, forty years. And I will make
the land of Egypt a desolation in the
midst of desolated countries, and her
cities among wasted cities shall be a

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found. *Rivers* is used for the mouths of the Nile in the Delta, *river* does duty for the whole country, Upper as well as Lower Egypt. As most of the country has no rainfall, the Nile is the source of economic life and has always been central in the religious thought of the people. A favorite term for it being "Father of the Gods."

My river is my own, I myself made it, is the proud boast that drew the curse of the prophet. In spirit this is similar to a statement found on a wall in Biban el-Moluk. "He had begotten himself" (Naville, Records of the Past VI, 103-112). The Pharaoh, as the living embodiment of Osiris, the god of the Nile, had religious functions that flaunted the claims of divine birth. This arrogance was distasteful to the Hebrew mind, and the curse that looked toward the destruction of Egypt naturally carried with it the death-blow to Osiris worship.

Hooks in your jaws (4), may be nothing more than poetry, for allegory as well as parable must never be made to go on all fours. But though this method of catching the crocodile is at least unusual today, Herodotus reports that in the district of Elephantiné the beast was actually caught in this way (Herod. II, 70).

Fish sticking to his scales (4), may have a basis in actual fact. Various parasites, and leeches do prey on the crocodile. But the reference here is to the mercenary soldiers of Egypt and her allies.

Not to be buried (5), was thought to be one of the greatest disasters, as the spirit of the unburied dead was unsheltered from the torments of the upper world. To them the outcry of the uncovered blood of the dead was an appalling tragedy (Gen. 4:10; Rev. 17:6) and not to be buried was a disgrace to all concerned (Amos 2:1; 1 Kings 13:22; 14:11; Jer. 7:32; 8:2; 14:16; 16:4).

29:6b-9a. EGYPT, THE BROKEN REED, will be desolated. A rushlike staff, or a broken reed (6b, 7) admirably characterized the precarious support Egypt afforded her allies. Weak and vacillating, she often proved as treacherous as a staff made from a common rush. Such was her reputation in Palestine and perhaps beyond (2 Kings 18:21; Isa. 36:6). She had failed Israel more than once, and hence the cutting-edge of the curse.

29:9b-12. EGYPT BECAUSE OF HER ARROGANCE, will be depopulated from Migdol, in the northeast of the Delta, 12 miles south of Pelusium (30:5; Jer. 44:1; 46:14), as far as Assuan in Upper Egypt, at the 1st cataract of the Nile. For 40 years the land will be uninhabited (11, 12). If this 40 years is not the addition of a statistically minded scribe seeking to arrange chronology of the book, like *uninhabited*, it must be taken relatively not absolutely. To the Semite, who abhorred the restraints of literalism, forty was equivalent to the active period of a lifetime, and uninhabited meant decimated. A commonplace of history is that the ravages of war are repaired by peace for a generation. Hence we understand the curse to indicate that the disaster will be so great that recovery cannot be expected within a generation.

desolation forty years. Indeed, I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations; yes, I will disperse them among the countries.
13 Indeed, thus says (Lord) Yahweh: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among
14 whom they were scattered, and I will restore the captivity of Egypt; yes, I will send them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their birth, and there they shall be a lowly kingdom.
15 She shall be the lowliest of the kingdoms, and she shall no more exalt herself among the nations, for I will make them so small that they shall no more
16 rule over the nations. Nor shall they ever again be [12] the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing to remembrance iniquity, when they turned after them. Then shall they know that I am (Lord) Yahweh.

29: 13-16. EGYPTIANS WILL BE DEPORTED from other lands and segregated in Upper Egypt. This is only superficially related to the preceding oracle (40 years of 11, 12, 13). But this very contact suggests it is supplementary and hence later than 9b-12. It is doubtful if the superscription to the chapter, with the date 587 B. C. includes this section. A new problem has arisen, and that apparently from changed conditions. Egyptians, uprooted from their own country by the fortunes of war, presented a problem to the prophet. It is clear that the message is not primarily one of redemption for Egypt. Two ideas are prominent: the 1st is that the power of Egypt is to be so limited that it will never again be a menace to other peoples, thus it must be restricted to Upper Egypt. The other note struck is that Egyptians abroad—probably those limited to the habitat of the writer—must be sent back home. Like most foreigners, they were becoming an irritation to the natives.

These 2 features aid us in determining the date. They were to be segregated in Pathros, the land of their birth (14). This was Upper Egypt, lying from a short distance south of Memphis to the 1st cataract at Assuan (Isa. 11: 14; Jer. 44: 1, 15). Here, with Thebes as capital, were the headquarters of the 25th dynasty of Egypt, of Ethiopian extraction (712–664). They were aggressive leaders and left the impress of their rule on the page of history, but they had passed off the stage before Ezekiel was born. The 26th dynasty (664–525), sprang from a princely house in Sais, in the West Delta, and so built on the earlier foundations, that the upper country might easily be considered its birthplace. At the close of Hophra's reign (571-568) the country was in a state of insurrection. His successor Amasis (568–525), enjoyed a period of great prosperity; his fleet was in every port of the Mediterranean, his merchants on every highway, the isles of Greece were among his allies, and Cyprus paid him tribute. Egyptian officers and merchants and slaves were far and near, and the dawn of a new day seemed at hand. Then, on the top of internal dissension, came Cambyses (528–525), and with him came the end. This seems the best background for these vss. that are essentially an antiforeign campaign.

Pathros (cf. above) in current Palestinian opinion could easily be thought of as the birthplace of the Egyptian 26th dynasty. The prophet was not a research student in the origins and ancestry of ancient monarchs.

Reduced so small that she shall no more rule over the nations (15), is a method that has been used up to the present time to prevent an overaggressive nation misusing its power. From the Palestinian point of view, a further protection, a buffer state consisting of the Delta, or Lower Egypt, was added. Again modern politicians often follow an ancient pattern. The prophet hoped for the independence and the prosperity of his own people. Israel never again would have confidence in distant and reduced Egypt, and would never again bring her iniquity to mind by repeating her ancient alliances with the defeated power.

17 Now it happened in the twenty-seventh year, on the first of the first month, the word of Yahweh came to
18 me as follows: Mortal man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon rendered with his army a great service against [10] Tyre. Every head was bald, and every shoulder was calloused, but there was no reward for him or his army from Tyre, for the service he had rendered
19 against her. Therefore, thus says the Lord Yahweh: See! I am about to give to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon the land of Egypt. He shall carry off her riches, and spoil her and plunder her, and this shall be reward for his army;

29: 17-20. NEBUCHADREZZAR UNABLE TO CAPTURE TYRE will be awarded Egypt as his wage.

The date and the contents of 17-20 are of extreme importance. This is the latest chronological note in the book, April, 570 B. C., and the content may be registered in a sentence. The prediction of Ezekiel that Nebuchadrezzar would capture and demolish Tyre (Ezek. 26: 7-14) was proved by history to be incorrect. When these verses were written, if the date be correct, the Babylonian king, after a siege of 13 years, had abandoned the costly attack on the amazingly stubborn island city. But now Yahweh was going to give him the riches of Egypt for the splendid service against Tyre.

We then have here the correction of the prediction in Ezek. 26: 7-14, which in the course of the years was palpably incorrect. This is illuminating for history, psychology, and O.T. theology. Unless we have to do with some cryptic use of names, this is an admission that Nebuchadrezzar did not finally reduce the city of Tyre. Further, the date, April, 570, whether the work of the prophet himself or of an editor, is quite incomprehensible if not correct. Thus it is clear that Nebuchadrezzar had left the city, that the city had not capitulated, and that the Babylonian army was on its way to Egypt. Even if the city were under the control of Babylonia a year later, as inferred by some, that in no way alters the content of this oracle (*Eissfeldt Forschungen und Fortschritt*, 1933, 422).

At this time Egypt was in the throes of an insurrection, in which Hophra lost the throne and Amasis, in 568, took over the control of the empire. By 570, when this apology was written, the broad trend of international affairs was clear. Nebuchadrezzar had pulled up stakes from Tyre and was on the move toward the south. Party strife, verging on civil war, loomed serious throughout the land of the Pharaohs, and the conclusion seemed assured. The servant of Yahweh would have his well-earned wage (19, 20). When Egypt was stronger Assyria had conquered her as far as Thebes (670–660). Now the conqueror of Assyria, the imperial Babylonian, whose renown was on every lip, would be rewarded according to his deserts (18-20).

Information concerning such a conquest is all but lacking. Neither the Egyptian monuments nor the Greek histories make mention of it. Archæology has little or nothing to report. Petrie, in the spring of 1935, did find at Anthedon, an island site on the old highroad to Egypt, between Arish and Rafa, an altar-like shrine of fine, smooth, buff-colored tiles, very similar to one found at Korsabad. This, the archæologist suggests, may have been set up by Nebuchadrezzar when on this expedition (A.J.S.L. Oct. 1936, 53). The Babylonian fragment informing us that "in the 37th year of Nebuchadrezzar (568), Egypt came up to do battle and Amasis, king of Egypt, called out his troops, . . he accomplished . . . destruction, . ." is little more than tantalizing (Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, 367). We are led to the conclusion that as the records of Egypt for this period are comparatively complete, and they give no hint of such an invasion, the Babylonian activity on the Egyptian frontier could not have been a major event. The country was not completely

20 I have given him the land of Egypt, his reward for which he served. (which they accomplished for me) [13]

21 In that day I shall cause to sprout a horn to the house of Israel, and to you I shall give an open mouth in their midst. Then shall they know that I am Yahweh.

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ruined, and Nebuchadrezzar neither carried off her spoil nor ruled over her. The enthusiasm of the prophet for the regal commander from the east and his dislike for Egypt had swept him beyond what history would sanction.

A question of considerable importance emerges here, that is the bearing of this on the prophet's conception of prediction. It furnishes evidence that interested as Ezekiel might be in forecasting the future of foreign nations, the accuracy of such statements to him was of quite secondary importance. He had not been quite right about the fate of Tyre, and his conviction that Nebuchadrezzar was going to devastate Egypt failed to hit the mark, but two facts remain. His essential message had been ethical. That stood, and the sense that sin must be punished is more important than any power of clairvoyancy. The message of the great prophet always was prophetic, or speaking on behalf of God rather than predictive (cf. Deut. 13: 1-5; Jonah). The second fact was that to them Yahweh was the absolute sovereign, and had the privilege of changing his mind as men changed their relations to him (cf. Jer. 18). Apparently Ezekiel was convinced he had declared the mind of God (26: 7-14), and now (29: 17-20), 16 years later, he expresses what he believes is the changed mind of Yahweh.

Bald heads and calloused shoulders were the result of carrying baskets of earth and stone on the head, and timber on the shoulder, by the Babylonian workmen as they filled in the channel that separated the mainland from the island of Tyre.

The land of Egypt and the plunder of her wealth was to be the reward of Nebuchadrezzar. This raised for the prophet no ethical problem. It was the pattern of international life in which he lived and which he had inherited, and was in complete accord with the theology of Deuteronomy (Deut. 26, 28). It was the custom; it was God's way, hence no problem was raised. Today we could not defend the bloodshed and fury Ezekiel was willing to let loose on Egypt in the name of Yahweh. But in practice we have not made much advance.

29: 21. A horn of the house of David is going to sprout. This is eschatological and very similar to Ps. 132: 17. But it has no context.

An open mouth, seems to be a scribal reference to 3: 26; 24: 25-27; 33: 21, 22 (cf. Introd. xiv).

Chapter 30

30: 1-26. EGYPT'S DESTRUCTION CERTAIN. 1-19 lacks a superscription, apparently going back to 29: 16 from which it has been dislodged. There are three sections, 1-9, 10-12, 13-19, each separate from the other, but united in a common theme. 1-9, Egypt will be destroyed by Yahweh, is decidedly eschatological (espec. 3). General terms and vague phrases prevail, yet the sword is the instrument of Yahweh (4, 5, 6). Allies are referred to and are named in a very corrupt verse, which may even be a late insertion (5), and may point to the closing days of the reign of Amasis (528–525). If it comes from Ezekiel, it probably should be assigned to 571, which on the whole seems very doubtful. 10-12, Egypt will be destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar. This is an independent section, quite ordinary, adding luster neither to the author nor the age. It may belong to 571 and may even be a page out of the prophet's scrapbook. 13-19, Egypt will be destroyed by Yahweh, is eschatological. Fire and sword will execute the judgment of Yah-

30:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, prophesy and
say. Thus says (Lord) Yahweh:

Wail! woe the day,
3 For near is the day,
Yes, near is the day of Yahweh,
A day of cloud,
A time will it be for the nations.

4 For the sword comes against Egypt;
And anguish shall be in Ethiopia;
When the slain fall in Egypt,
When they take away her multitude,
And her foundations are smashed in pieces.

5 Ethiopia and Lybia (and Lydia),[1]
And all the mongrel races (and Cub),[2]
And the sons of Crete,[3] (along with them) [4]
6 Shall fall by the sword. (thus says Yahweh) [5]

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weh. Egypt, north and south, her chief cities and chief men will go down. There is much repetition of phrase, and again and again the poem returns to the attack of places like Memphis, Thebes and Pelusium. This betrays a fourth-rate writer or the repetitions of a scribe. In its present form it is surely later than Ezekiel and the original probably was not earlier than the invasion of Cambyses in 528.

30:20-26. EGYPT WILL BE DESTROYED BY BABYLONIA, is assigned to April, 587 B. C. (20). Vss. 20 and 21 are peculiarly appropriate for this date. Nebuchadrezzar defeated Necho at the border of Egypt at this time. The arm of Pharaoh was shattered (cf. Jer. 37:3-5). But vss. 22-24, and their duplicate, 25, 26, indicate that the 2 arms of Pharaoh, i. e., Upper and Lower Egypt, will be broken, which implies a later date. The attack of Babylon on Egypt in 571 is the most fitting background. Vss. 22-24, of which 25, 26 are a reworked version, may have come from Ezekiel.

30:1-9. EGYPT WILL BE OVERTAKEN BY THE DAY OF YAHWEH. While here there are resemblances to 29:6b-9a, 9b-12, and 29:17-20, they are too general to give any clue to date. Much of the eschatology reminds us of 7:2-22 (cf. 7:2, 5-7), though it is lacking altogether in the poetic vigor. In fact the repetition of hackneyed phrases suggests secondary material. Vs. 5 has by some been considered a scribal addition (Hermann, 201). But, corrupt as the present text is, behind it may lie knowledge of mercenaries and allies in the army of Amasis in 528 B. C., of whom we have information in history. On the whole, the inferior literary quality, the indications of late history, and the lack of date, strongly point to non-Ezekiel authorship, possibly around 528.

Wail, woe the day (2, 3) sounds like an echo of 7:2, 3, 5-7. A *time* for the nations, refers to the day of Yahweh that is surely coming. Time is emphatic, specialized, if the Hebrew text is correct. The Septuagint reads *end*, for which the Hebrew word is very similar to that for time. Probably the Greek has preserved the original (cf. 7:2).

Ethiopia (4), of the ancient Cush, begins a short distance south of the modern Assuan dam. It is a country with great varieties of climate and topography and has vast natural resources. From ancient days its people trafficked with Egypt and at various times definitely affected the northern civilization, for short periods even ruling the whole land. The ancestry of the 25th dynasty, 712-664, was Ethiopian, and their successors had strong interests in the same section.

Lybia, or Phut (5), lies on the coast west of the Delta. Its influence on Egypt proper was continuous and probably exceeded that of Ethiopia. The 26th dynasty originally came from these hills. Some interpreters take this to be Punt, the Somali coast, on the Red sea (cf. 27:10; Gen. 10:6).

Lydia, in Asia Minor, does not fit into the local geography or history. It

Yes, the allies of Egypt shall fall,
And the pride of her might shall go down,
From Migdol up to Assuan, in her they shall fall by the sword.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

7 And she [6] shall be desolated
In the midst of desolated lands;
And her [7] cities shall be wasted
In the midst of wasted cities.
8 Then they shall know that I am Yahweh,
When I kindle a fire in Egypt,
And all her allies are crushed.

9 In that day shall messengers
Go forth from me in ships
To terrify the confident Ethiopians,
And anguish shall come upon them,
As the day of Egypt; Behold! it comes.
10 Thus says the Lord Yahweh:
Now I will cause to cease the multitude of Egypt
By the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon.
11 He and his army with him, most savage of nations,
Are being brought to destroy the land,
And they shall draw their swords against Egypt
And fill the land with corpses.
12 And I will make the Nile dry land,
(And will sell the land into the hand of the wicked).[8]
And will make the land and its fullness
A desolation, by the hand of strangers.
I Yahweh have spoken.

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is true that in the reign of Amasis, Samos and Crete were allies of the Egyptian king, and that Cyprus paid him tribute. But Lydia lay beyond that border. If the name is not a scribal mistake for Lybia, it may be the name of some local tribe on the border of Egypt, which has not been located.

Mongrel races may equally well be read Arabians. The consonants are the same for either translation. The former seems the more likely and may refer to mercenary soldiers, Greeks and others, who were in Egypt in the days of Amasis.

Cub is a name otherwise unknown.

The sons of Crete, is an emended text in place of, "the children of the land of the covenant," which is certainly incorrect. Some sleepy scribe had failed to see that these groups were to fall by the sword, and had slipped in a phrase meaning his own people. But the emended reading is so similar to the present text that it is almost certainly correct, and is verified by the Septuagint. Also these were among the allies of Amasis, all of whom were to be crushed (5, 6, 8).

Messengers in ships (9), if the text is correct, must refer to the transport service on the Mediterranean which, of course, was of long standing. In these days because of wide contacts it must have been significant. But armies usually marched to and from Egypt by land. Messengers, however, and special contingents, for the sake of speed, well may have occasionally gone by boat. But, it is to be noted the Greek has *swiftly*, a translation of a Hebrew word that differs but slightly from the one for ships. Most modern translations prefer, messengers go forth from me swiftly.

30: 10-12. EGYPT WILL BE DESTROYED BY NEBUCHADREZZAR. This is neither related to what precedes nor to what follows. It lisps Egypt's doom in current speech, as destroy the land, cause the multitude to cease, most savage of the nations. No phrase illumines, no incident adorns the picture. It may be from Ezekiel, for the most gifted of men may sometimes descend to the commonplace.

The hand of the wicked (12), as a parallel to the hand of Nebuchadrezzar (10), surely came from a priestly scribe who had a prejudice against the far-famed king. Ezekiel and Jeremiah both accepted Nebuchadrezzar as the servant of Yahweh, accomplishing his will. Also, the whole sentence, I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked, is absent in the Septuagint.

30: 13-19. EGYPT, HER ARMIES, AND CITIES will go down before Yahweh, who will achieve this destruction by fire, sword and judgment, is largely eschatological.

13 Thus says the Lord Yahweh,
Also (I will destroy the idols)[9] I will cause to cease from Memphis the chief leaders,[10]
And never again will there be a prince in the land of Egypt.
(And I will put the fear of Yahweh into Egypt).[11]
14 And I will make Pathros desolate,
And kindle a fire in Tanis.
And I will execute judgment in Thebes.
15 And will pour my fury on Pelusium, the bulwark of Egypt,
And I will cut off the multitudes of Thebes,
16 And will kindle a fire in Egypt.
Pelusium shall be in anguish,
Thebes shall be split open,
And Memphis, her walls shall be breached.[12]
17 The choice men of On and Bubastis shalt fall by the sword,
Even these shall go into exile.
18 In Defenah also, the day shall be dark
When I break the sceptre[13] of Egypt.
In her, the pride of her strength shall be cut off.
As for herself, a cloud shall cover her,
As for her daughters, they shall go into exile,

Yahweh kindles the fire (14, 16), he pours out his fury (15), he, himself, executes judgment (14, 19), and an eclipse over the land is part of the terror (18). The sword plays but a minor part (17, 18). While the evidence does not sustain the theory that vss. 16-18 are a late version of 13-15, the repetitions suggest that there has been much tampering with the original text. The numerous geographical references do remind us of Ezekiel's interest in detail, but other features incline to a later date, perhaps 528 B. C.

I will destroy the *idols*, images, in the A.V. and I will put *the fear of Yahweh* into Egypt (13), are the contributions of a religiously-minded scribe. It is true that the word for idols is used frequently in Ezekiel (cf. 6:9; 8:10), but in the present text we find 2 entirely unrelated ideas so intertwined as to be incomprehensible. I will put the fear of Yahweh into Egypt, where fear stands for true religion, belongs to the late period of Judaism, and images, or better, worthless gods, may have been influenced by Isa. 10:10. These 2 sentences, and the scribal change of a word, seem to be the work of editors. The earliest text was apparently an attack on the rulers of the land and read as follows:

Also, I will cause to cease from Memphis the chief leaders
And never again shall there be a prince in the land of Egypt.

In its early form it was implied that there would never again be a nation in Egypt. Without leader and prince there would be a reversion to the tribal and the nomadic life. This is, of course, the interpretation of a Palestinian where the nomadic life is primitive, not that of an Egyptian where the peasant life is basic.

Memphis, the great city of Lower Egypt, was situated near the southern apex of the Delta. Pathros (cf. 29:14), Tanis, or Zoan, today called San, is on the east branch of the Nile. Thebes is in Upper Egypt, in the Luxor area, and was a capital of that ancient empire. Pelusium, Sin in the Hebrew text, is on the northeast frontier of Egypt. On, or Heliopolis (17), the city of the sun, is situated a few miles northeast of Memphis (cf. Jer. 43:13). Bubastis is on the east arm of the Nile, Tell-Bastu, a city dedicated to the sacred cat, was near the present Zagazig. Defneh, Tell-Daphne, near Pelusium, likewise fell under the displeasure of Jeremiah (Jer. 43:9).

Pride of her strength (18) is frequently reproached in Ezekiel (cf. 7:24; 24:21; 32:12; 33:28). Egypt must fall because of her sins.

30:20-26. EGYPT'S DESOLATION WILL BE PERMANENT. This oracle is dated April, 587 B. C. Confusion of text and content is as serious here as in 10-19. An editor was responsible for vs. 20. Vs. 21, that under the symbol of a broken arm declares that Pharaoh was

19 And I will execute judgment in Egypt.
Then shall they know that I am
Yahweh.

20 Then it happened in the eleventh
year, on the seventh day of the first
month, the word of Yahweh came to
21 me as follows: Mortal man, the arm of
Pharaoh, king of Egypt I have shattered, and lo! it shall not be bound up,
so that it may be healed by putting on
a bandage to bind it up, to strengthen
it, to grip the sword.
22 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh:
Behold I am against [14] Pharaoh, king
of Egypt, and I will shatter his arms,
both the strong and the broken, and
will knock the sword out of his hand,
23 and will scatter the Egyptians among
the nations, and disperse them through-
24 out the countries. Then I will strengthen
the arms of the king of Babylon, and
will put my sword in his hand and
will shatter the arms of Pharaoh, and
he shall groan before him with death
groans.
25 And I will strengthen the arms of the
king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall. Then shall they know
that I am Yahweh, when I put my sword
into the hand of the king of Babylon,
and he stretches it out against [14] the
26 land of Egypt. And I will scatter the
Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries.
Then shall they know that I am Yahweh.

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soundly defeated, surely acclaims the victory of Nebuchadrezzar over Pharaoh Necho on the border of Egypt in 587 (cf. Jer. 37: 5, 11). It is appropriate, poetic, jubilant. The whole feel of it supports both chronology and authenticity.

But the atmosphere changes in 22-26. Here are duplicates. Vs. 23 is a close parallel to 26, and 24 is similar to 25, while 24b in the Septuagint differs so greatly from the Hebrew that large scribal activity is incontestable. Closer examination convinces one that we have doublets of the same oracle (a. 22-24 and b. 25, 26).

It is further noticed that while vs. 21 speaks of the past, these doublets deal with the future, and change the symbol from one arm to two. These changes are significant. Not only do the two arms change the picture, but the broken one definitely refers back to vs. 21, as an event in the past. While there are marked similarities between this (22-26, and 29: 9b-12, note also 29: 19 which comes from 570), such as the dispersion of the Egyptians, the symbolism claims 571–567, during the insurrection under Amasis as an appropriate background for authorship.

I will shatter his arms, both the strong and the broken (22, 24, 25), may be best interpreted as the two rulers, Hophra, the last of the 25th dynasty, and Amasis, the 1st of the 26th. The old ruler, Hophra, had been defeated by Nebuchadrezzar. His arm was broken. The new ruler, Amasis, represented a new power, the strong or sound arm. The expressed conviction is that the king of Babylon with the sword of Yahweh will shatter both parties at war in Egypt (22, 24, 25). This is in close agreement with 29: 17-20, and is the message of the doublets 22-24, 25-26.

Chapter 31

31: 1-18. EGYPT, A GLORIOUS KINGDOM, BECAUSE OF haughtiness will go down to the pit. This chapter contains 3 quite distinct, yet closely related sections. 1-9. Egypt a glorious kingdom. 1-2a, the date registered, early June, 587 B. C., is as suitable as any other for this oracle. For the 2d section, 10-14, which logically follows the 1st, it is equally appropriate. The 3d section, 15-18, because of similarity to 28: 6-10, may come from a considerably later date. Vss. 2b-9 are a poem dealing with the Egypt of history. In allegory Pharaoh is a glorious tree, of all trees the most splendid, with head in the heavens and roots in the primeval waters. Style and imagery acclaim the poet Ezekiel. 10-14. Egypt has fallen because of haughtiness. The allegory is here used for didactic purposes, and rhythm has been lost. But the ideal, as

31:1 Now it happened in the eleventh year
on the first day of the third month, the
word of Yahweh came to me as fol-
2 lows: Mortal man, say to Pharaoh, king
of Egypt, and to his multitude:

Whom are you like in your greatness?
3 Behold, a Tashur tree (cedar) [1] was in Lebanon,
Fair were its branches, and lofty its top; (a wooded height giving shade) [2]
And among the high clouds,[3] were its feathery tips.

4 Waters made it great, the great deep made it tall.
Her rivers, she sent flowing [4] all around its root-bed,[5]
Her canals she sent out to all trees of the field.

5 So its height was higher than all trees of the field.
Its boughs were multiplied, and its twigs were lengthened out
From abundant water. (when he sent forth) [6]

6 In its branches nested all the birds of heaven; [6]
Under its boughs, bore young all the beasts of the field;
And in its shade dwelt all the mighty nations.
7 Fair was it in its greatness, in the length of its branches,
For its root was laid among abundant waters.

8 Cedars did not hide it in the garden of the gods.
Fir trees were not equal to its boughs,

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well as the language, warrants us in ascribing it to Ezekiel. 15-18. Egypt is sent to sheol. This is an independent oracle, in which the allegory of the foregoing, and mythology similar to 28:6-10 are intermingled. It is extremely grotesque if we endeavor to press various phrases, as slain, uncircumcised, descend into sheol, into the tree allegory. But neither allegory, nor parable, should be so treated. No doubt it is later than 587 and not earlier than 571. It may be from the pen of Ezekiel.

31:1-9. EGYPT A GLORIOUS KINGDOM. An allegory. The date (1), early in June, 587 B. C., was some months after Nebuchadrezzar had encountered Necho on the border of Egypt (Jer. 37:5, 11), and a little over 2 months before the fall of the city of Jerusalem, according to chronology (2 Kings 25:8) (cf. Introd. xiii).

Whom are you like, introduces us to the comparison that follows in the form of an allegory. In general, the peoples of the Near East enjoy teaching by means of signs and symbols, parables and allegories. Ezekiel, called a speaker of parables (20:49), indulged in signs (3:1-3; 4:1–5:12), was fertile in the use of illustration, and frequently ventured over into the field of parable or allegory (19:1-14; 17:1-24; 24:3-14). While he uses the eagle, the lion, and the vine to convey his message, with none is he more effective than the tree. We have here a superb picture of Egypt at the height of her power. The later imitation of this, from which the mythological elements have been removed is well worth comparison (cf. Dan. 4:7-9, 11-14).

Tashur is the name of a tree (cf. Isa. 60:13; 41:19; Ezek. 26:6) the identity of which is not established. Assyria, in the R.V. and A.V. as well as in some modern translations, beyond doubt is incorrect. Cedar, obviously is due to a scribe who passed on to future readers his understanding of an obscure term.

In Lebanon, is of course not strictly appropriate as the place for a tree that symbolizes Egypt. In it there is surely no suggestion that Egyptian origins, either peoples or dynasties, were in the north. Relations between Egypt and Syria had indeed been sustained for millennia, and there had been much interchange of commodities, legends and even population. But the allegory has but one point, that is that Egypt has been most glorious, and the writer, a Palestinian, knew of no tree that symbolized this so perfectly as one in Lebanon.

Its top in the clouds (3), and its roots

Nor were chestnuts like its
branches [7]
No tree in the garden of the gods
Was like it in its beauty.
9 Fair I made it, with its many branches;
And every tree in Eden, those in the
garden of the gods,
Envied it.

10 Therefore, thus says (Lord) Yahweh:
Because it exalted itself,[8] and
raised its top among the clouds,[3] and
became haughty because of its height,
11 therefore I am giving it into the hand
of the god of the nations. (he shall
surely do it) [9] Because of its wickedness
12 I have dispossessed it. Strangers,
the most savage of nations, have cut it
down and left it on [10] the mountains;
and in all the valleys its branches
have fallen; and its boughs lie shattered
in every ravine; and all peoples
of the earth have hastened from its
13 shadow and have abandoned it. On
its ruin heaps all the birds of heaven
perch, and on [10] its boughs are all
14 creatures of the field; so that no trees
by the waters may pride themselves in
their height, nor put their tops among
the clouds,[3] nor make their height
their god. (all those drinking water) [11]
For all of them shall be delivered to
death, to the underworld, among ordinary
men, with those who go down to
the pit.
15 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: In the

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in the great deep (4), sketches in the large the unparalleled stateliness and stability of the tree and hence the nation. To the dweller on the barren hills of Judah there was enchantment in such a vision.

The great deep, the rivers, canals, and water courses (4, 5), while in part reminiscent of the Delta and the Nile valley, seem very definitely to usher us into the mythological realm (cf. Com. 26:19). The garden of the gods is part of the same concept (cf. 28:11-19).

The poem is vivid, the allegory simple, and the interpretation lies on the surface. Egypt was the great kingdom of history. This was but the prelude to the next section, its downfall.

31:10-14. Egypt the Glorious Tree Is Cut Down. This follows the preceding, seems to be the actual objective of the poem, and calls for the same date and authorship.

It exalted itself, or *became haughty* (10), was its sin and its doom. This is the same note as that found in 28:1-10; 29:3, 9; 30:6; 27:3.

The god of the nations (11), or as it might be translated, the mighty one of the nations, was the ruler of the most savage of nations (12). To give his name again would add no information and would weaken the literary quality, and he, who was the servant of Yahweh (Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10), might well gain such a title.

So colossal is the catastrophe, mountain top, valley and stream-bed piled high with the débris of the shattered tree, that the virtue of humility must be patent to all (14). Pride of height is folly and might does not make right, might be a modern rendering.

All of them, that is the proud or haughty, shall be delivered to death, to the underworld (14). Pharaoh goes down to the pit, as do the common herd. Behind this lies the prevailing O. T. idea of the future life, so clearly expressed in Job. The small and the great are there, and the servant is freed from his master (cf. Job 3:13-19; 7:9-10). Why then should man be proud?

Death, the underworld, and the pit all belong to current Semitic mythology, already briefly discussed (26:19-21; 28:1-10). Death, the Hebrew of which is Mot, which in the recently discovered Ras Shamra tablets is the name of the god of the underworld, may perhaps here also have been considered the guardian of the pit. At any rate it is closely associated with sheol.

31:15-18. Egypt Goes Down to Sheol in the midst of the uncircumcised. Without a connecting particle linking this up with the preceding, it stands alone. But the fate of the Babylonian in the

day when he went down into sheol, I closed the great deep over him.(I covered) [12] I restrained her rivers, and the great waters were hemmed in. And on account of him I clothed Lebanon in mourning, and all the trees of the field swooned away [13] because of him.
16 By the crash of his fall, I made the nations shudder, when I thrust him down to sheol with those descending to the pit. So all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, shall comfort themselves in the underworld. (all those drinking water) [11]
17 These also went down with him into sheol to those slain by the sword. (even his arm, they dwelt in his shadow, in the midst of the nations) [14]

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underworld, and the tree symbol (16-18), at least continue the theme of the preceding oracles. Though the mixture of mythology and allegory is incongruous, the whole is not devoid of the poetic. If we read it as a personification of Egypt in the person of Pharaoh, and let the figure of the tree and the trees of Eden fade from the picture, we avoid the grotesque features and gain an impression of vigor.

Sheol (15) is a Semitic word, the root-meaning of which is not certain. It may be derived from a root meaning a chamber, or a hollowed-out place, or as some prefer from a word meaning, to consult an oracle. In Hebrew it is one of the words used for the abode of the dead. Others such as underworld, undermost part of the earth, pit, and grave are used, but all originate in some idea of sepulchre, and all are vague. It took a millennium of speculation to arrive at the definiteness and the certainties of Dante, and Ezekiel makes some slight contribution to this development (cf. espec. 26: 20; 28: 1-10; 32: 25, 29, 30; 37: 12-14). This is one of the important passages, even though there is uncertainty of text. It agrees with others that the pit or sheol, or the underworld, is the abode of all the ancestors, all of whom are together and fare alike. It may be that 32: 17-32 is susceptible of an interpretation that suggests a further development. Sheol in 31: 15 is beneath the great deep, and is barred and locked like any dungeon. The great deep was closed over him as with doors, is the intimation of vs. 15. The next stage in the growth of the idea will be different compartments, in which those of differing degrees of guilt may be segregated (cf. Isa. 14: 15). Later still the ethical conscience of at least one writer provided that in sheol there should be "four hollow places . . . three have been made that the spirits of the dead might be separated . . . and a division for the spirits of the righteous, in which there is a bright spring of water" (Enoch 22: 1-10, written about 170 B. C.) It was only in measure as people had time to think about problems of the future life, and faced such reputed monsters as Pharaoh and the kings of Babylonia (cf. Isa. 14: 4-21) that, out of the very necessity of the case, such concepts took form.

I clothed Lebanon in mourning, and all the trees of the field swooned away (15), underlying the poetry, conveys the ancient Hebrew idea that nature animate and inanimate are only 2 parts of one great whole. What affects the one influences for weal or for woe the other also. When man sins all nature suffers (cf. Gen. 3: 17, 18; 2 Sam. 21: 1-14; 24: 1-25; N. B. Rom. 8: 20-22).

All the trees of Eden . . . shall comfort themselves in the underworld (16), when interpreted tells us that all rulers and peoples go down into the pit, which is the destiny of all. To make the allegory literal, and imagine that the author thought of sheol as a place in which there were trees, streams, springs, etc., a replica of the earth, would be pressing the symbol too far. Probably he did not think concerning the appointments of sheol. Later writers divided and furnished it along well-known lines, patterned hell on the worst they knew, and made heaven a glorification of the best.

18 Whom are you like (like this) [15] in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? But you have been thrust down with the trees of Eden to the underworld. In the midst of the uncircumcised you lie, with those slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude. Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

32:1 Now it happened in the twelfth year, on the first day of the twelfth month, the word of Yahweh came to me as fol-
2 lows: Mortal man take up a dirge over Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and say to him:

A young lion of the nations you think yourself to be [1]
But you are like a dragon [2] in the seas,
Spouting water through your nostrils,[3]
Muddying the water with your feet,
And befouling your rivers.[3]

In the midst of the uncircumcised (18), like 28:10, was the greatest indignity that a Jew could wish for anyone. The Egyptians practised the act, but it is doubtful if, with them, its neglect was considered serious. The cure, however, is that Pharaoh, the glorious, in sheol will be among the offscouring of the earth; sad fate for a proud aristocrat.

Chapter 32

32:1-16. EGYPT WILL BE DESTROYED. 32:1-16 and 17-32 are well-defined divisions in this chapter. In the 1st half (1-16), quite diverse materials have been collected, but the destruction of Egypt is common to all.

Vs. 1 gives the date March, 585 B. C., which will hold for much of the chapter. In vss. 2-8 Pharaoh, a great sea-monster, is netted and destroyed, a spectacle so horrible that all the lights of heaven are extinguished. It is an allegory, couched in poetic form, displaying the culture and the spirit of Ezekiel. In 9 and 10 Pharaoh's downfall, terrifying the nations, is announced, most of it in language that is threadbare. It is a far-off echo of the stirring tones of 26:16-17; 27:29-31, 35, 36. Like 31:15-18, date and authorship remain uncertain. Vss. 11-14, Egypt, people, cattle, and all will be annihilated, then the corruption will be cleaned up. The movement is swift, the structure poetic, and the content suggestive. Vocabulary and attitude alike point to Ezekiel as the author. It would be forceful in 585 or 571. 15, 16, when Egypt is desolated then they shall know that I am Yahweh. It is declared to be a dirge (16), which is supplementary to 2-8, 11-14, and reads like the touch of an editor.

32:1-8. PHARAOH THE DRAGON WILL BE DESTROYED. The date following is that of the Hebrew text. The Septuagint places it one year earlier, in the 11th year. This was apparently the work of a scribe who correlated it with the reported fall of the city (33:21). He probably felt that all oracles against foreign nations should have been composed by that date, and that now was the beginning of a new era. True, constructive thinking should begin when the destruction was complete. But that is no reason why a prophet should not continue his studies of affairs international. Egypt remained a vital factor in world history down to 525 B. C., and some of our oracles come from 571 (29:17-20; 30:10-12, 22-24; 30:1-9), while others were probably as late or later than 528 (30:13-19; 29:13-16; 27:9b-25a).

A dirge or lamentation has a peculiar rhythm, called limping verse, which is very appropriate for the expression of sorrow (cf. Com. 19:1, 10, also note 26:17; 27:2, 32).

A young lion; previously the author had compared kings to lions (19:3, 5, 7), and now uses the comparison in a cynical sense. It is under such a figure that Pharaoh thinks of himself as a lordly beast, the king of animals. But the prophet has at hand an entirely different symbol, a sea-monster, an unholy monster of the deep. There is no clash of thought

3 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh:
Now I will spread over you my net,
(with an assembly of many people) [4]
And will bring you up [5] in my net,
4 And toss you on the ground.
On the open field I will throw you,
And cause all the birds of heaven to settle down on you,
And from you I will sate the beasts of all the earth.
5 Yes, I will put your flesh upon the mountains,
And will fill the valleys with your putrid carcass.[6]
6 Also, I will soak the land with your oozing blood, (to the mountains) [7]
Till the valleys shall be filled from you.
7 Then, when I have annihilated [8] you,
I will veil the heavens, and darken the stars,
I will cover the sun with a black cloud,
And the moon shall not give its light.
8 All the shining lights of heaven, I will darken over you,
And will spread out darkness on your land.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

9 And I will bring anguish on many people, when I cause your crash to be heard among the nations, even to lands that

in the different figures, as they come from different quarters and represent different estimates of the same person.

The dragon only provides the occasion for the poet to pass over into mythology. The whale spouts, the sea-cow muddies the stream as she wallows around, the crocodile is caught in the net, and the carcass of any one of them is consumed by vultures and hyenas. But the dragon is not one of these. He combines features of all and more, for he is the primeval monster out of the dusk of mythology.

The spectacle in 31: 12, 13, where the fallen tree fills rivers, valleys, and mountaintops, is commonplace beside this; the carcass is food for bird and beast; bones and blood are strewn on the mountains, and the putrifying mass fills all the valleys (5, 6). Yet this is only preparation for the consternation that reigns among the heavenly bodies (7, 8). Mythology has provided much of this framework; the conquest of the primitive dragon, Tiamat, who was the personification of the great deep, by Marduk, was common property of all Palestinians. The monster was actually taken in the net, an idea frequent in Ezekiel (cf. 12: 13; 17: 20; 19: 8), in the oldest stories of mythology. The darkening of the heavens (7, 8) also reminds us of the close relation that existed between the monster of the seas, the dragon, and the constellation Draco, the dragon, in Semitic mythology. The picture may have primitive elements in it, but it is masterful. Grotesque it may be, but it is Egypt even if in caricature. Vs. 5 has a curious parallel in the Assyrian records, referred to by Bertholet (Bertholet Com. 165). It comes from the annals of Tiglath-Pileser and reads as follows: *The bodies of their warriors, on the top of the mountains I piled up in heaps; the blood of their warriors I let flow over valleys and hills.* Did both but record the well-known brutalities of war in those far-off days, or did Ezekiel know of the records of the Assyrian king?

Vss. 7, 8 record the ancient belief in the solidarity of the university. Man and nature belong together. Out of the dust he was made and to it he returns. He sinned and the garden became a wilderness, and friendly animals became savage. His destiny was linked up with the heavens, and his iniquity eclipsed their glory (cf. 31: 15-18). The truth in this ancient idea is very sobering.

32: 9, 10. PHARAOH'S DOWNFALL BRINGS TERROR TO ALL. This is expressed much better in 26: 16, 17; 27: 29-36. The passing of great empires, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome and others is strong evidence of the insecurity of any of our social organizations. Only arrant ignorance dare say, "It can't happen here."

10 know you not. And I will cause many people to be amazed at you, and their kings shall shudder over you when I whirl my sword before their faces. And suddenly, in the day of your fall, they shall be terror-stricken, each for his own life.

11 For thus says (Lord) Yahweh:
The sword of the king of Babylon shall come against you.
12 By the swords of warriors I will cause your multitude to fall.
The most savage of the nations are they all.
They shall lay low the pride of Egypt,
And all her multitude shall be wiped out.
13 I will also destroy all her cattle
From beside abundant waters.
And never again shall human foot muddy them,
Nor animal hoof [9] stir them up.
14 Then I will make their waters settle down,
And their rivers flow like oil.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

15 When I make (the land) [10] Egypt a waste,
And the land is desolated[11] of its produce,
When I smite all her inhabitants,
Then they shall know that I am Yahweh.

16 This is a dirge and they shall sing it,
The daughters of the nations shall sing it,
Over Egypt and over her multitude shall they sing it.
Oracle of the Lord Yahweh.

17 Now it happened in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the first month,[12] the word of Yahweh came

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32:11-14. The King of Babylonia Will Wipe Out Egypt. The king is not named, as he was a well-known figure on the horizon. Babylonia, as in earlier messages, is the most savage of nations (28:7; 30:11; 31:19), and the pride of Egypt (12), is still her guilt. The climax of threat against this hated nation is reached in vss. 13, 14, which is a prediction not of peace and prosperity, but of absolute annihilation. Neither man nor cattle shall pass through the land again (13). Hence the streams will be clear, without sediment, and smooth as though they were oil (14). This is in line with the general tone of Ezekiel, and raises a question of the authorship of an oracle such as 29:13-19.

32:15, 16. When Egypt Is Destroyed then they shall know that I am Yahweh, we are informed, is a dirge. Vs. 15 is the voice of a theologian who was familiar with Ezekiel, and vs. 16 gives us information that applies only to 2-10.

The daughters of the nations singing the dirge conform to the custom of Palestine, ancient and modern. Women were the professional mourners (cf. Exod. 15:20, 21; 1 Sam. 18:7; 2 Sam. 1:20).

32:17-32. A Dirge Over Egypt and the Nations. This division of the chapter is broken up into smaller segments. Vs. 17 gives the date 585, according to the Hebrew. The Greek adds the month April and for private reasons reduces it by one year, which is unnecessary (cf. 32:1, and Introd. xiii). 18-21, 22, 23, 24, 26-28, call Egypt to go to sheol to view Ashur (22, 23), Elam (24), Meshek and Tubal (26-28), as they lie in the underworld. While there is some disorder, especially in 18-21, and there are occasional additions to the text, there remains evidences of rhythm and poetic imagination. Authenticity and date are favored by the content. 25 is only a collation of phrases, due to the activities of scribes. 29-32 is supplementary to 18-28. Edom, the princes of the north, and the Sidonians do not qualify as great empires. Personal prejudices may at a later date have conspired to add these to the list, using phrases that long had been common property.

Vss. 18-21. This is the most confused section of the chapter. The Septuagint has a shorter version with a different verse order, reading 20, 21, 19, which has much to commend it. Vss. 21 and 19 read as follows:

18 to me as follows: Mortal man, wail over
the multitude of Egypt and cast him
down, (she and the daughters of famous
nations)[13] to the underworld, with
those going down to the pit.
19 Than whom are you more beautiful?
Go down, and be laid with the un-
20 circumcised. In the midst of those slain
by the sword they shall fall, (a sword is
delivered, they have drawn it out)[14]
and shall lie with (her and)[15] all his
multitude.[16]
21 Then the mighty warriors, from out
of sheol, shall say[17] to him of his
allies, "They have gone down, they lie
with the uncircumcised, slain by the
sword."

22 There is Ashur, and all her company,
(his graves are round about him,
all of them slain, fallen[18] by
the sword)[19]
23 Whose graves are made in the inner
part of the pit;
And her company is round about her
grave,
All of them slain, fallen by the sword,
Who caused terror in the land of the
living.

24 There is Elam and all her multitude
Round about her grave,
All of them slain, fallen[18] by the
sword,
Who went down uncircumcised to the
underworld,
Who spread their terror in the land
of the living,
And have borne their shame with
those going down in the pit.

25 (In the midst of the slain they have made a bed for her with all her multitude round about her graves, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, because their terror was laid on the land of the living, and they have borne their shame with those going down to the pit, in the midst of the slain he is laid).[20]

26 There is Meshek, Tubal and all her
multitude,

The mighty warrior with his helpers
Shall speak to him out of sheol,
Than whom are you more beautiful?
Go down, and be laid with the uncircumcised,
Slain with the sword.

An excellent critical translation of the Greek version is in *Expository Times*, Oct., 1910, 21-24, by F. H. Woods. Notwithstanding the difficulties of the text, the general thought is plain: Egypt is commanded to pay a visit to the underworld.

The daughters of famous nations (18) may be an annotation, here quite out of place, referring to the great nations in vss. 22-27.

The pit (18, 23, 24), the grave (23, 24, 25), the underworld (18, 23, 24), and sheol (21, 27), all synonyms for the abode of the dead, amplify the suggestions found in the earlier writings of Ezekiel (cf. 26:20; 28:1-10; 31:14-17). Not only is this the resting-place of those slain by the sword, the uncircumcised, the multitudes of the nations, but it is thrown into sharp contrast with the land of the living (23, 24, 25, 26, 28). Not only is there a separation between the dead and the living, but in the realm of the dead there are classes, the honored and the ordinary, and in the pit there are corresponding divisions. The warriors, the giants of yore (27), possibly the fabled ancestors or prehistoric heroes, have a position of prestige. A sign of their honor was the insignia of their profession, sword and shield. The war-heroes were the saints in olden days, and they occupied the chief place in what seems to have been the genesis of the idea of heaven. This is a far cry to the vision in Revelation, chapters 21, 22, but still in much of both our thinking and practice the warrior in full armor stands on the highest pedestal.

The sword for a pillow and the shield for a cover (27), was the court dress for the elite in sheol. Uncircumcised was the token of the vulgar mob in the underworld, a Jewish attitude strongly savoring of the priesthood. Here it is parallel to, slain with the sword, multitude, etc., and

Round about her grave[21] all of them uncircumcised,
Slain by the sword
Because they spread their terror in the land of the living.
27 They do not lie with the warriors, giants of yore [22]
Who went down to sheol with their battle weapons,
And laid their swords under their heads,
And their shields [23] over their bones,
For the terror of the warriors
Was on the land of the living.

28 You also, in the midst of the uncircumcised
(Shall be shattered and) [24]
Shall lie with those slain with the sword.

29 There is Edom, her kings and all her princes,
Who were put in her grave [22] with the slain of the sword,
These are lying with the uncircumcised,
Even with those going down to the pit.

30 There are the princes of the north
All of them and all the Sidonians
Who have gone down with the slain, uncircumcised, (in their terror, ashamed from their warriors) [25]
With the slain of the sword.
They shall bear their shame,
With those going down to the pit.

31 These ones, Pharaoh shall gaze upon,
And be comforted concerning all his multitude,

the physical fact should not be overstressed. These were, however, the common mass of humanity, and to them the Egyptians belonged.

It would also seem that this great underworld region, where the dead of all nations were laid, had centers, where the national graves were situated. This would necessitate as many different centers as there were different nations. So while the underworld was still considered a dead and dismal place (cf. Isa. 38: 18) it was losing some of its vagueness, and under ethical demands was taking on color and form. Add to such messages as Ezek. 32: 18-27; 31: 14-17; 26: 20; and Isa. 14: 9-15, the stories of the translation of Enoch (Gen. 5: 24), and of Elijah (2 Kings 2: 11), and we are well on the way in the fashioning of both a heaven and a hell.

Ashur or Assyria (22, 23), was the great empire, with its capital at Nineveh, that for the 200 years preceding 605 was the great world-power, in glory rivaling any of ancient days. Yet the kingdom of Ashurbanipal, Sargon, and Sennacherib, so wide-spread and so strongly founded, had crumbled in the dust and all her company were in the grave.

Elam (24), lying in the mountainous districts east of the Tigris, had for 3 millennia sent her tribes and chieftains down into the plain and had established not a few important kingdoms. If the history of these dynasties was not known in detail to the poet, the name had become a legend and included empires and glory that had long since been dissolved.

Meshek and Tubal (26) are even more legendary. But it is clear they represent peoples of kindred race in Asia Minor, to the north and east of Cilicia. At times hordes poured out of this country spreading terror before them, and leaving behind traditions of irresistible nations to the still farther north. The two names are usually found together in the O. T. (cf. Gen. 10: 2; Isa. 66: 19; also Ezek. 27: 13; 28: 2; 39: 1). In the Assyrian monuments they were celebrated for their fierceness six centuries before Ezekiel.

Vss. 29-32. Edom, the princes of the north, and the Sidonians are in sheol. These, at best, were petty groups, which, while they have no importance in this place, received the attention of some scribe who may have thus relieved himself of a private grudge. Edom was cursed in 25: 12-14, probably late, for adequate reason, but here there are no landmarks. The princes of the north are too vague for comment. Sidonians, to whom respects have already been paid in

Slain by the sword, Pharaoh and all
his multitude.

32 Because he spread [26] his terror over
the land of the living,
Therefore he is laid in the midst of
the uncircumcised,
Those slain by the sword, Pharaoh
and all his multitude.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

33:1 Then the word of Yahweh came to
2 me as follows: Mortal man, speak to
the children of your people and say to

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our text, 28:20-24, contribute nothing to the page.

Pharaoh . . . will be comforted (32) is the compliment to 31:16, where all the nations in the undermost parts of the earth were comforted when they saw the mighty Pharaoh reduced to their own state of impotence. He was no better than they. Now he is comforted, when he finds others as badly off as himself. Misery likes company.

THE THIRD MAIN DIVISION

33:1–39:29. Restoration of Israel.

33:1-33. THE PROPHET A WATCHMAN, and related problems. There are 3 main divisions, 2-20, 24-29, 30-33, as well as important editorial material in this chapter. In 2-20, the responsibilities of prophet and people are stated. 2-6 describes the duties of the watchman to whom the prophet is likened, 7-9 (cf. 3:16b-21). 10-20 gives the assurance that God wishes all men to live an abundant life, but that each will be judged by his own conduct in the immediate present. This doctrine of individualism is a recension of 18:1-31. These two are closely related and come from an early period in the ministry of Ezekiel, though the final expression may be later than the fall of the city in 586. Jerusalem was the home of their origin. 24-29, the claims of the squatters, must come from a period some 5 or 10 years after the fall of the city, to give those who escaped the disaster time to return, camp on the city ruins, and begin the reconstruction of their hopes and homes. The decade within 586-576 meets the needs of the case. On the face of it, this was delivered in Jerusalem in person (25-28). 30-33, the prophet was very pleasant, but ineffective. The people were hearers but not doers of his words. No comfort for captives, no hope of return is here, but a warning of coming catastrophe (33). Though it is without historical features, it has the same tone as the messages against Jerusalem in 593-586. It must have been the result of considerable observation, and suggests some of the qualities of Ezekiel as a preacher. 1, 21-23 are editorial work. Vs. 1 is the formal introduction. 21 supplies the only date in the chapter, January, 585, and is an editorial synchronization with other dates (cf. Introd. xiii). It was of no value to one who had been an eye-witness to conditions in Jerusalem and at that very time was in the ruined city (24-29). The fugitive and the dumbness find their background in 24:25-27; 3:26, 27; and 29:21b, and are explanatory of phrases that were not intended to be taken literally (cf. Introd. xxii).

Chapter 33

33:1-9. THE WATCHMAN AND HIS RESPONSIBILITIES (cf. 3:16b-21). The man in the watch-tower is a well-known figure in Palestine. During summer and autumn, the little, elevated, conning-tower in the corner of every vineyard is occupied on occasions of danger from robbers or from wild animals, and vigilant eyes are on the alert. Also the shepherd is the watchman of the flock and is held accountable for loss or damage (1 Sam. 17:34-37; Amos 3:12). In war-time similar precautions were essential (1 Sam. 26:13-16; 2 Sam. 13:34; Isa. 52:8; 62:6; Cant. 3:3).

them, When I bring a sword against a
land; if the people of the land take a
man from their borders and appoint
3 him their watchman, and he see the
sword coming against the land, and
blow the trumpet and warn the people,
4 then whosoever hears the sound of the
trumpet but does not take warning, if
the sword [1] come and take him, his
5 blood shall be on his own head. He
heard the sound of the trumpet but did
not take warning, his blood shall be on
himself. He who gave the warning [2]
has saved his own life.
6 But the watchman, if he see the sword
coming and does not blow the trumpet,
then the people are not warned, and if
the sword [1] come and take one of
them, he is taken in his iniquity. But
his blood I will require from the hand
of the watchman.
7 Now, as for you, O mortal man, I
have appointed you a watchman to the
house of Israel. Whenever you hear a
word from my mouth, you must warn them
8 from me. When I say to the wicked,
(wicked) [3] You shall surely die, and
you do not speak to warn the wicked
from his way, he (wicked) [3] shall die
in his iniquity, but his blood I will require
9 at your hand. If, however, you
warn the wicked man of his way, to
turn him from it, and he does not turn
from his way, he shall die in his iniquity,
but you have delivered yourself.
10 Mortal man, now say to the house of
Israel, You talk saying, Inasmuch as our
transgressions and our sins are upon us,
and in them we are pining away; then
11 how shall we live? Say to them, by my
life, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh, I do not
delight in the death of the wicked, but
that the wicked should turn from his
way and live. Turn, oh turn you from
your wicked ways, for why should you
12 die, O house of Israel? And mortal
man, say to the children of my people,
The righteousness of the righteous shall
not deliver him in the day of his transgression;
nor shall the wickedness of
the wicked cause him to fall thereby
in the day when he turns from his transgression;
nor shall he that is righteous
be able to live thereby in the day of
13 his sin. When I say to the righteous,
You shall surely live,[4] and he relies
on his righteousness and practises iniquity,
none of his righteous deeds shall
be remembered, but on account of his
iniquity that he practises, he shall die.

The comparison of the prophet to a watchman was natural and popular (Isa. 21:6; 56:10; 62:6; Jer. 6:17; Hosea 9:8). When he sounded the trumpet his official responsibilities were at an end. If he failed to give warning he was blameworthy. The task of the prophet was a serious and delicate one. To understand the moral and spiritual dangers to the individual and the community was no easy task. To diagnose the evil and appraise the good in any civilization demands great discrimination. Great evils sometimes don very pious garbs, while great benefits may be clothed in somber robes.

The people of the land (2), refers to people in general as in 2 Kings 11:14, 18, 19, 20; Jer. 37:2; 44:21. At a later period it is used to distinguish common people from the priestly caste (Lev. 20:2; cf. Hag. 2:4; Zech. 7:5).

A word from my mouth (7), was the message Ezekiel had to deliver to the people. The compass of that word was in the economic, political and religious areas. The essential principle was that sin would inevitably be punished. In part, we are able to understand the basis of his decision as to what was sin. He was a disciple of the law and the prophets, and was especially indebted to Jeremiah. But his was a creative mind and in more than one point he breaks with the dogmas of the past. In all, his conviction is that his is the word of Yahweh (cf. Introd. xxiii.-xxv).

33:10-20. The Individual Will Be Judged for his own, immediate sins. This is expressed at greater length in 18:1-32. Some were greatly discouraged by the disasters that had befallen them, and were inclined to be fatalistic. Individual effort was of little avail, as the fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth had been set on edge (18:2). Hence they concluded that Yahweh had not given them a fair chance, and his

14 Or when I say to the wicked man,
You shall surely die, but he turns from
his sin and practises justice and righteousness,
15 and restores [5] the pledge
(the wicked),[3] gives back the plunder,
walks in the living statutes, practises
no iniquity, assuredly he shall not
16 die. None of his sins that he had committed
shall be remembered against him.
Justice and righteousness he had practised,
assuredly he shall live.
17 Now the children of my people say,
The way of Yahweh [6] is not equitable.
18 When a righteous man turns from his
righteousness and practises iniquity, he
19 shall die because of it.[7] And when a
wicked man turns from his wickedness
and practises justice and righteousness,
20 on account of them he shall live. Do
you still say, the way of Yahweh is not
equitable? I will judge every one of
you according to his deeds, O house of
Israel.

21 Then it happened in the twelfth year
of our captivity, on the fifth day of the
tenth month, the fugitive from Jerusalem
came to me saying, The city has
22 fallen. Now the hand of Yahweh had
been upon me in the evening before the
fugitive came, and he had opened my
mouth, when [8] he came to me in the
morning, then my mouth was opened,
and I was not dumb again.

23 Then the word of Yahweh came to
24 me as follows: Mortal man, those dwelling
in these ruins on the land of Israel
are saying as follows: Abraham was
only one, and he possessed the land.
But now we are many, to us the land
is given as a possession.
25 Therefore say to them, Thus says the
Lord Yahweh, You have eaten with the
blood, and your eyes have been lifted
up to the filthy images, and you have
shed blood. Now, shall you possess

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ways were not equitable (18, 20). Ezekiel insists that Yahweh desired that all should turn from their evil and live, and asserts that inherited tendencies, and past transgressions, in the providence of God, do not determine the destiny of the individual (cf. 18: 1-32).

33: 21-23. THE DATE AND THE DUMBNESS OF THE PROPHET. The date is January, 585 B. C. according to the Hebrew, a year earlier according to the Septuagint (cf. Introd. xiii and 24: 25-27).

The fugitive, may stand either for an individual or a group. But the prophet, even if he were in Babylon at the time indicated in the Hebrew, would have had full information much earlier about the tragedy. Such news travels rapidly. A caravan would take from 4 to 6 months for such a journey; but the destruction of the home city would be broadcast inside of a month. This apparently was the reason that led the translators of the Greek to reduce the date by a year.

The dumbness of the prophet is part of the editorial work. Our *captivity* implies, and has always been so interpreted, that Ezekiel went into exile in 597. This was the editor's conviction, which is at variance with much of the book. The dumbness is a fiction that disregards his continued prophetic utterances from 593-586 (cf. Introd. xxii, xxiii).

33: 24-29. SQUATTER'S PROPERTY CLAIMS IN JERUSALEM, is parallel to 11: 14-16, and presents a state of affairs that followed the downfall of the city. The city was in ruins; many property owners had been deported; some of the poorer class, eager to establish homes in what had been the Holy City, were venturesome enough to return, select advantageous locations on the hillside, and make good their claims with the sword (26). But there were local disputants for such sites as well as exiles and friends of exiles who seem to have insisted on prior rights. The squatters added argument to the power of the sword, and appealed to race relationship, and the divine promise to Abraham (24. cf. Gen. 12: 1-3), asserting that their need was greater than that of their illustrious ancestor. No doubt they used the movements of history to support their contentions. Yahweh, by the captivity in 597 and again in 586, had shown his displeasure against the leaders and had dispossessed them. History and the

26 the land? You depend on your swords,
you practise an abomination, and each
of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Now,
shall you posses the land?
27 Thus shall you say to them, Thus
says the Lord Yahweh, By my life,
those in the ruins shall fall by the
sword, and those in the open country,
I will give to the wild beasts to devour,[9] and those in the strongholds
28 and caves shall die by pestilence; and
I will make the land waste and desolate,
and the pride of her strength shall
cease, and the hill-country of Israel
shall be desolate, without a visitor.
29 Then shall they know that I am Yahweh, when I make the land waste and
desolate, because of all their abominations that they have practised.
30 Now, as for you, O Mortal man, the
children of your people are talking
about you, beside the walls and by the
doors of the houses. (one to another) [10]
Each one says to his fellow as follows:
Come along and let us hear what may
be the word that comes from Yahweh.
31 So they come to you (my people) [11]
and listen to your words, but they do not
practise them, for falsehood [12] is in
their mouths (these are those practising) [13] and their heart runs after
32 unearned profits. Indeed you are to
them as a singer of love songs, soft
voiced, an excellent minstrel. Yes, they
listen to your words, but none of them
practise them.

33 But when it comes;
Surely, it is coming,

then they shall know that a prophet has
been among them.

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sword, race and religion, seemed to be on their side of the controversy.

But the prophet insists that they do not qualify as inheritors of the promise, for they violate the ritual and the social requirements of Yahweh (25, 26). These verses but summarize sins found elsewhere (cf. 18:6, 11, 15; 22:11). These common people, some of whom had been youths in the days of the reform of Josiah, 621, all of whom passed through the searching days of the sieges, 597 and 586, still followed the old pagan rites, so sturdily denounced by the great prophets for a century and a half. Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, had learned by personal contact that those left behind in Palestine were of the poorer sort (14:21-23; Jer. 24:2, 8-10; 29:16-19). Because of their sins, complete extermination would be their end, and the land would be utterly desolate (27-29). People who either could not or would not learn from the past teaching and past national experiences surely were hopeless.

33:30-33. THE PEOPLE ENJOYED GOOD PREACHING but neglected good works. The prophet had some of the gifts of a popular preacher, and the city streets were heralding his praise. If we knew the basis of this gossip, it would throw a light on personal qualities of the preacher. Was it the music of his voice as he intoned some of his dirges? Did the literary features, some of which were superb, attract the crowd? Did his dramatic gifts make a wide appeal to fellow citizens? Or was it his hard-hitting judgments that to them were the words that came from Yahweh? Whatever the appeal may have been, the fact remained that though they may have been good listeners, they failed in the thing that was essential, practice. Hence destruction was inevitable (33).

Chapter 34

34:1-31. RULERS HAVING FAILED, NOW YAHWEH WILL BE THE GOOD SHEPHERD. This chapter begins the reconstruction program for the nation. Vss. 1-10, 11-16, and 23, 24 belong together. The 1st section, 1-10, denounces rulers, under the guise of shepherds, who, because of their selfish greed, are the cause of the national downfall. It is based on Jer. 23:1-4, though not written in the reign of Zedekiah. Kingship is viewed with a retrospect of 400 years and is judged a failure (cf. 1 Sam. 8:7-9; Hosea 8:4), that should illumine the future. Vss. 11-16 continue the preceding. The shepherds having failed, Yahweh himself will be the good shepherd, while 23, 24, in

34:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, prophesy against
the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and
say to them (to the shepherds),[1]
Thus says the Lord Yahweh, Woe to
the shepherds of Israel, who feed only
themselves. Should not the shepherds
3 feed the sheep? Curds you eat, and you
clothe yourselves with wool, you kill
the fatlings, but my flock [2] you do
4 not feed. The weak you have not
strengthened, and the sick you have not
healed, the crippled you have not
bandaged, and those driven away you
have not brought back. The lost you
have not sought, and the strong [3] you
5 have ruled harshly (them also).[4] So
my flock [5] has been scattered because
there was no shepherd, and has become
food for all the wild beasts of the open
country (and has been scattered).[6]
6 My flock is straying on all the mountains,
and on every high hill, and they
are scattered over all the earth (my
flock),[7] but no one is seeking, no
one is searching.
7 Therefore, O shepherds, hear the word
8 of Yahweh. By my life, Oracle of the
Lord Yahweh, because my flock has
become a prey, and my flock has become
food for all the beasts of the
open country, there being no shepherd,
for my shepherds did not look after my
flock, but the shepherds fed themselves

which my servant David is to be vicegerent under Yahweh, completes the picture. This also leans heavily on Jer. 23: 5, 6.

These 3 sections are a literary unit, built on Jer. 23: 1-6, and propose a reconstruction of the nation on theocratic lines. Such a dream of the future would not be expected to materialize within a decade of the great disaster. Also it savors of the theologian in his study rather than the reformer in the marketplace. The fires of youth that were so futile have given place to the conviction that hope lies not in man but in God. While there is no brilliancy of expression, there is clear insight into the weakness of human institutions. The interest in detail and the apparent influence of Jeremiah suggest caution against placing it later than Ezekiel. It may be a contribution from his pen sometime between 580 and 571. Vss. 17-22, the upper classes are denounced because of oppression of the poorer people and of wastefulness. There is no relation between this and what precedes or follows, nor with Jer. 23: 1-6. The theme is different, the thought is confused, the literary construction is poor, and repetitions are numerous (cf. 17, 20, 22). It reflects class struggle and probably is an insertion from a much later period. From 400 on we find considerable literature of this type. Vss. 25-31—The covenant of peace. A united people restored to a happy and fertile land, is a fitting close to the chapter. This pattern, in which a happy conclusion follows a message of woe, which is very general in Old Testament literature, must be credited to the scribe. There are here no infallible landmarks of authorship, but it reads more like a disciple of Ezekiel than the master, and suits the historical features of 522 better than earlier. Yet dogmatism is taboo.

34: 1-10. SHEPHERDS, A SYMBOL FOR RULERS, ARE DENOUNCED. The term is very appropriate and is carried through consistently, and is peculiarly fitting for a Palestinian author to Palestinian people. The same symbol is used by Jeremiah (2: 8; 3: 15; 23: 1-10), later still in Zechariah (10: 3; 11: 3-17), but nowhere is the picture more complete than here, where we have an excellent background for the Shepherd Psalm (23). The failure of the shepherd is admirably summarized in vss. 3-5, and his responsibilities are implied. Like to these are the responsibilities of the kings, and princes. The care of the people, food, clothing, healing and defence are on the shoulders of their overlords. This is the ideal and the practice of the shepherd people. The sheich is head of the tribe and as such has the full care of all the members of the household. But grave difficulties arose

9 and not my flock, therefore O shepherds,
10 hear the word of Yahweh. Thus
says the Lord Yahweh, I am against [8]
the shepherds, and will require my
flock from their hands, and I will cause
them to cease shepherding my flock.[9]
Never again shall the shepherds feed
themselves, for I will deliver my flock
from their mouths, that it may not be
food for them.
11 For thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Behold,
I myself will look after my flock,
12 and will watch over them.[10] As a
shepherd searches for his flock on the
day of wind-storm,[11] when his sheep
are scattered, so will I search for my
flock, and will rescue them from all
places where they were scattered on
the day of thick cloud and darkness.
13 And I will bring them out from the
peoples, and will gather them from the
countries, and bring them into their
land, and will feed them on [8] the hill-country
of Israel, in the valleys and
in all the habitable places in the land.
14 In good pastures will I feed them, and
in the high mountains of Israel shall
be their meadows. There shall they lie
down in good grazing lands, and shall
feed in rich pasture [12] on [8] the hill-country
15 of Israel. I, myself, will shepherd
them, my flock, and I, myself, will
cause them to lie down. Oracle of the
16 Lord Yahweh. The lost I will seek,
and the one driven off I will bring
back, and the crippled I will bandage,
and the sick make strong. Also I will
watch over [13] the fat and the strong,
and will shepherd them [14] in justice.
17 And as for you, O my flock,[15] thus
says the Lord Yahweh, Behold, I am
about to judge between sheep and sheep,
18 between the rams and the he goats. Is
it not enough for you, that you feed on
the good pasture, that you should
trample the remnant of your pasture
under your foot? Or that you drink
clear water, that what is left over you
19 should muddy with your feet? So that
my flock must eat what you have
trampled under foot, and must drink
what you have muddied with your
feet.
20 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh
(to them),[16] Behold I, myself,
will judge between the fat [17] and the
21 lean sheep, because you thrust with side
and shoulder, and gore with your horns

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when the tribal system had to give way to the monarchical, as the more complex life gave opportunity for evils that would not have been tolerated in more primitive society. The prophet who sought the causes of national calamity blamed the current evils on the leaders who naturally were in the limelight. It was justified, inasmuch as those privileges that were the product of the social order carried equal responsibilities. War, plague, famine and captivity (5-9) are, however, only in part due to kings and politicians.

34:11-16. YAHWEH HIMSELF WILL COME TO THE RESCUE, and this is the only way out, according to the prophet. He will be the good shepherd, and will carefully fulfil all the required duties. This is an eschatological concept that is pessimistic as to the outcome of the natural processes, and later was more fully developed.

On the day of wind-storm (12), an amended text is parallel to, day of thick cloud and darkness, and seems the best reading for a very corrupt passage. It gives the natural Palestinian background. Another reading that is passable is, "As a shepherd looks for his flock on the day of engulfing ruin, when the sheep are being scattered, so will I look for my flock."

I will watch over the fat and the strong (16), the translation in the Greek is preferable to that in the Hebrew and the A. V. The strong need justice as well as the weak. Leaders may be the victims of our social system and may suffer as grievously as the downtrodden. The prophet asks justice for the one and aid for the other.

34:17-22. YAHWEH WILL SETTLE CLASS CONFLICTS. The pastoral symbolism is continued, but the theme differs. The sheep are divided into two groups, the lean and the fat. Apparently the lean sheep are *my flock* of vss. 16, 22, but how to interpret rams and he-goats (17) is not clear; nor is there adequate indication as to the basis of conflict.

all the feeble sheep until you scatter
22 them abroad. But I will save my flock,
and never again shall it be a prey, and
I will judge between sheep and sheep.
23 Also, I will establish over them one
shepherd, and he shall shepherd them,
my servant David, (he shall shepherd
them),[18] even he, shall be to them a
24 shepherd. And I Yahweh will be their
God, my servant David being prince in
their midst, I, Yahweh, have spoken.
25 I will also make with them a covenant
of peace, and will cause to cease the
wild beasts from the land, so that they
may dwell securely in the desert and
26 sleep in the thickets. And I will make
a blessing for them even round about
my hill, and will send the downpouring
rain in its season; blessed showers shall
27 they be. And the trees of the field
shall bear their fruit, and the land shall
yield its produce, and they shall be
secure in their land, and they shall
know that I am Yahweh when I break
the frame of their yoke, and deliver
them from the hands of those to whom
28 they had been slaves. And never again
shall they be a prey among the nations,
nor shall the beasts of the earth devour
them. But they shall dwell securely, no
29 one making them afraid. And I will establish
for them a noted plantation, and
never again shall they be consumed by
famine in the land, nor shall they again
30 suffer the reproach of the nations. Then
shall they know that I, Yahweh, am their
God (with them),[19] and that they,
the house of Israel are my people.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

31 You are my flock, the flock of my
pasture.
You are men, I am your God,
Oracle of the Lord Yahweh.

Economic advantage may be the cause of controversy.

34:23, 24. My Servant David Will Be Assistant Shepherd. In earlier literature David had been called my servant (2 Sam. 3:18; 7:5, 8, 26), which was an honorable title, and had even been spoken of as shepherd of my people Israel (2 Sam. 5:2). The phrases are but the symbols of a good leader, one after the order of David. It is scarcely likely the writer was thinking of a David *redivivus*, though Jewish thought, at times, was hospitable to the idea of reincarnation; Elijah, or one of the prophets, or John the Baptist might rise from the dead (Mal. 4:5; Mark 8:28). Nor need we conclude that he had in mind a member of the Davidic family, Joiachin (cf. 17:22-24) or some other. For that, these verses are altogether too vague. David had become the symbol for a successful ruler over a united kingdom, free from the tyranny of foreigners, with peace and prosperity within her borders. This, the union of north and south under one head, is what is emphasized here (cf. 37:15-24; 43:9; 46:16). The name or the ancestor of the ruler is of small importance. Indeed, so vague is the personality that nothing would be lost should he fade out into the prince of chapters 40-48. The kindred passage in Jer. 23:5, 6 is much more colorful and personal. Here Yahweh is dominant, he is God.

34:25-31. Yahweh Will Make a Covenant of Peace with Land and People. This has its counterpart in many parts of the O. T. Other passages to be noted in Ezekiel are 16:60; 20:37; 36:24; 37:26-28, while Jeremiah has one of outstanding interest (31:31). Promises of peace from foes (Isa. 9:5--7; Micah 4:3, 4), and safety from wild beasts (Isa. 11:6-9; Hos. 2:18; Lev. 26:4-6), and amazing productivity of the soil (Amos 9:13-15; Hos. 2:21-23; Lev. 26:4, 5; Joel 3:18), are among the hopes entertained by Jewish dreamers. Most of the main lines are found here, but while it is a happy picture, it is not ecstatic.

My hill (26), refers to the highlands in the country, scarcely to the temple hill and then to the temple. Fertility is the gist of the promise rather than the establishment of religion. The country had suffered from drought and was promised relief. The land had been overrun with wild animals, as it had been desolated by war, and these are going to vanish. The citizens were slaves, pos-

35:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man, turn your face
toward Seir, and prophesy against it,
3 and say to it, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Behold I am against [1] you, O Mount
Seir, and I will stretch out my hand
against you, and will make you waste
4 and desolate. Your cities I will turn
into ruins, and you shall be a waste,
then you shall know that I am Yahweh.
5 Because you have had perpetual enmity, and you delivered the children
of Israel to the power of the sword,
in the time of their calamity, in the
6 time of final judgment for guilt; therefore, by my life, Oracle of the Lord
Yahweh, (Because to blood I will make
you and blood will pursue you) [2]
you are guilty [3] of bloodshed, there-
7 fore blood shall pursue you. And I
will make Mount Seir waste and desolate,[4] and I will cut off from it those
8 who go back and forth. And I will fill
(his mountains) [5] with the slain [6]
your hills and your valleys, and all your
watercourses; those slain by the sword
9 shall fall in them. And I will make
you a perpetual waste, [7] and your
cities shall not be inhabited,[8] that
you may know [9] that I am Yahweh.
10 Because you said, The two nations
and the two lands shall be mine, and
I will possess it, though Yahweh was
11 there, therefore, by my life, Oracle of
(Lord) Yahweh, I will do to you [11]
even as you did to them, according to
your anger and your jealousy, due to
your hatred, then I will be known in
12 them, when I judge you. Then you
will know that I Yahweh heard all your
revilings that you uttered against the
hill-country of Israel, saying, It is a
waste, to us they are given for food.
13 And you used boastful language [12]

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sibly a subject people, and they were going to be freed. Such was the happy message, delivered some time, probably long after the destruction of Jerusalem, but happy at any time.

Chapter 35

35:1-15. MOUNT SEIR, OR EDOM, IS CURSED. The final threats against Edom would naturally have been expected to have been segregated with 25:12-14. But there is no doubt that the editor used this and 36:1-7, which presupposes 35:1-15 (cf. 36:3-6), as an introduction to the following oracle, 36:8-15, the regeneration of the land of Israel. All the signs point to a late origin, probably long after 33:23-29, where the country was waste and the local inhabitants were squabbling for property. It may even be later than 25:12-14, otherwise we would expect them to stand together. Here, Edom is claiming both north and south, and is in possession of the country (cf. 10-15). Add to this, that all the phrases are conventional (cf. Hölscher 172), lacking good literary quality, and we should scarcely think of fathering it on Ezekiel. While we know so little of the detailed history of Edom, and apart from verses 10 and 12 this threat is so vague that a definite date is out of the question, the suggestion might be ventured that it was written sometime after the fall of Petra implied in Mal. 1:3, 4, around 450 B. C. If we have not doublets in it, such as 3b-6 and 7-11, in which there are similarities, there are interpolations, and 12-14 may even have had a separate origin.

Mount Seir (2) is the name of the territories east of the Arabah lying north of the gulf of Akabah, and is another name for Edom (Gen. 32:3). These descendants of Esau, Gen. 36:1, kinsmen of Israel, had frequently been the object of prophetic fury (Obad. 11-14; Jer. 49:7-22; Mal. 1:1-5; Isa. 34:5-17).

Perpetual enmity (5), delivering Israel to the power of the sword (5), reviling Israel (12), boasting over her (13), and claiming her ruins (10, 15), are the grievances of Israel. But Israelitish history shows that the Hebrews were the aggressors and the oppressors at least for long periods (Gen. 27:1-29; 2 Sam. 8:13, 14). In the time of their calamity, is lacking in the Septuagint, and may be due to the scribe, while in the time of final judgment for guilt, as in 21:30, refers to the catastrophe of 586 and not to a final world judgment.

Blood shall pursue you (6), preserves

against me, and you multiplied your
14 words against me; I heard it. Thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, As you have re-
joiced over my land [13] because it was
15 waste, so will I do to you, (as you re-
joiced in the possession of the house of
Israel, because it was a waste) [14] a
waste you shall be, O Mount Seir, and
all Edom, all of it, then you shall
know [15] that I am Yahweh.

36:1 And you, mortal man, prophesy to the
hill-country of Israel and say, O hill-
country of Israel, hear the word of Yah-
2 weh, Thus says the Lord Yahweh, Be-
cause the enemy has said against you,
Aha! and "The ancient high-places
3 have become our possession," there-
fore prophesy and say, Thus says the
Lord Yahweh, Because, yes, even be-
cause they have desolated and trampled
you down on every side, so that you
might be a possession to the remnant of
the nations, and you have become the talk
4 and the scandal of people, therefore, O
hill-country of Israel, listen to the word
of (Lord) Yahweh, Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh to the mountains, and to the
hills, to the streams and to the valleys,
to the desolate ruins, and to the deserted
cities, that are a prey and a derision to
the remnant of the nations that are

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the primitive idea that until the blood was covered out of sight, the spirit of the slain, could not rest, but wandered about in the land of the living (cf. Gen. 4:10, 11; 2 Sam. 3:28; 16:8; Ezek. 16:6, 9, 39). In the Hebrew the word Edom and the word for blood *Dham* are so similar that vss. 5, 6 have an emphasis in the original it is impossible to reproduce. To that may be added the fact that ancient peoples often believed that words had actual magical values, and we then can imagine how effective such a curse would sound to those who heard the original (cf. Micah 1:10-15).

Two nations (10), refers to Samaria and Judea. We have no historical background for such a dream. The audacity of the Edomites was the greater as the deity and the land were supposed to be related. It was the *land of Yahweh* (cf. 1 Sam. 26:19; 2 Kings 5:17, 18; Zech. 2:12), and Yahweh still was there (10). It is noteworthy that according to the authentic Ezekiel, Yahweh had left the city because of the sin and pollution of the place (cf. 11:16, 22, 23, and 10:20-22). The exile was effective in destroying some primitive notions among some of the Jews, and away from the land of Yahweh they learned that he could be worshiped beyond the borders of Israel (Mal. 1:11; Isa. 19:19-25); and without the aid of the temple they could worship the God of their fathers in spirit and in truth.

Chapter 36

36:1-15. THE LAND OF PALESTINE WILL BE PURIFIED FOR MY PEOPLE ISRAEL. This continues the preceding chapter in thought and literary quality. 1-7. A threat against Edom, the chief invader of Palestine (2, 5). As this section now stands, compilation is the chief feature. The remnant of the nations, a strange phrase, parallels Edom (3, 4, 5). Vss. 3, 4, and 5, 6, are either reworked doublets, or contain idle repetition. Thus says the Lord Yahweh, and similar formulæ, usually signs of an inferiority complex, are overabundant. Phrases throughout are echoes of earlier literature. If this contains an early oracle it has been lost under the scribal accretions. All features point to a date similar to 35:1-15.

36:8-15. THE HILL-COUNTRY WILL BE REGENERATED. Here again is much repetition. Vs. 10 repeats 11, and 12a restates it. Vss. 13, 14, and 15 are set aside as two oracles and are appendices of 12b. If the critic could work back to the original promise it would be brief, without criteria for a date, except that in its present form it is late.

36:1-7. EDOM WILL BEAR ITS SHAME, and will be removed from the land. The hill country of Israel is personified throughout the paragraph. The enemy Edom (2, 5) has insulted it, laughed at it, and boasted that the high places, or

5 round about, therefore thus says (Lord)
Yahweh, Have I not, in the fire of my
jealousy, spoken against the remnant of
the nations, and against Edom, all of it,
because they have taken my land as a
possession for themselves, with joy of
heart and spiteful spirit, to possess it
6 and to plunder it?[1] Therefore prophesy
concerning the land of Israel, and
say to the mountains and to the hills, to
the streams, and to the valleys, Thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, Behold, in my
jealousy, and in my fury, I have spoken,
because you have borne the reproach of
7 the nations, therefore thus says the
Lord Yahweh, I swear that the nations
that are round about you, they
themselves shall bear their own shame.
8 But you, O hill-country of Israel,
your branches you shall put forth, and
your fruit you shall bear for my people
Israel, for they shall speedily come.
9 For behold, I am with you, and I have
turned toward you, and you shall be
10 cultivated and sown. Then I will multiply
men on you, all the house of Israel,
all of it, and the cities shall be occupied,
11 and the ruins rebuilt. Yes, I will multiply
man and beast on you, and they
shall increase rapidly, and I will cause
you to be occupied as formerly; I will
even do better for you [2] than in your
beginnings. Then you shall know that I
12 am Yahweh. And I will cause men to
walk over you, even my people Israel,
and they shall possess you, and you
shall be their inheritance, and never
again will you bereave them of children.
13 Thus says the Lord Yahweh,
Because they are saying to you, You
have bereaved men and bereaved your
14 nation, therefore you shall never again
bereave your nation. Oracle of the
15 Lord Yahweh. Never again will I let
the insults of the nations against [3]
you be heard, nor shall you ever again

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the old pagan altars, were in their possession (2). For high places the Greek has the word for wastes, and this has been followed by some modern commentators. It is unlikely that Ezekiel wrote, high places. To him Yahweh would have little interest in these ancient centers of idolatry. Remnant of the nations (3, 4, 5) probably refers to the Arabians, Moabites, Ammonites, and Ashdodites, the petty neighboring racial groups that were troublesome in the time of Nehemiah (cf. Ezra 9:1; Neh. 2:19; 3:33; 13:23). The mountains, the hills, the streams, the valleys, etc., but repeat what we have in 6:3 and 35:8. I swear (7) is literally I have lifted up my hand, as in 20:5, which was a sign of an oath. To bear their shame (7) implies the punishment of the people, which in this case would be banishment from the land.

36:8-15. THE HILL-COUNTRY WILL BE REGENERATED, hence a fit abode for the people of Yahweh, who will soon return. The country had been devastated by war; the soil had not been cultivated; hillside terraces had been washed away; fruit trees had been broken and neglected, and villages had been left in ruins. The land felt the curse of war and was desolate, but Yahweh was in the land and it would again be fruitful. The hope for the future not infrequently took this form, that of an amazingly fertile homeland. Most of these passages belong to a late period (cf. 34:25-31; Jer. 31:27; 33:12, 13; Zech. 8:12; Isa. 58:12; 61:4; Amos 9:13-15). I will multiply men on you (9) gives an emphasis on the side of population, which was ever an ardent hope of these people (Gen. 9:1; 12:2; Zech. 2:7, 8). Never again will you bereave them of children (12, 13) does not refer to the cults of child sacrifice, but to the fact that Palestine was always the spoil of war on the one hand, and on the other, it was a barren land out of which it was difficult to wrest a living. Lev. 26:38 declares that the land of your enemies will eat you up, while Numbers 13:32 reports it to be a land that eats up the inhabitants thereof. It was always an international battlefield. Plague ravished it (2 Sam. 24:15), famine was always within its border (Amos 4:6, 7; 1 Kings 17:1; Lev. 28:10), and at best it but satisfied the needs of the nomad (Num. 14:7). But the promise is, that hope within the human breast, I will do better for you than in the beginnings (11).

be exposed to the reproach of the peoples.
(nor shall you ever again bereave
your nation)[4] Oracle of the Lord
Yahweh.
16 And the word of Yahweh came to me
17 as follows: Mortal man, when the house
of Israel was dwelling on their own
land, they defiled it by their ways, and
by their deeds. Their ways before me
were as the uncleanness of a woman in
18 her impurity. So I poured out my fury
on them because of the blood they had
poured out on the earth, and because
they had made it unclean by their filthy
19 images. So I scattered them among the
nations, and they were dispersed among
the countries. According to their ways
20 and their deeds I judged them. Yet
they entered[5] the nations, whither
they went, and profaned my holy name,
it being said of them, These are the
people of Yahweh, and from his land
21 they have come. But I have regard to
my holy name, which they, the house of
Israel profaned among the nations, with
whom they dwelt.

36:16-38. The Coming Redemption. While the preceding theme is continued, this division is independent. It may be analyzed into five parts. 16-21, the captivity justified, yet the name of Yahweh is profaned by it. The priestly attitude is seen, and the vocabulary is similar to that of Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26). 22-25, Yahweh must redeem his people for his name's sake, is priestly and non-Ezekiel. 26-28, the promise of the new heart, is in marked agreement with 18:30-32; 11:19-21; and is a companion doctrine to individualism, 18:1-28; 3:19; 33:18. It is a prophetic message, diverse from the ceremonialism of the context, and may well be the only authentic part of the chapter. 29-32, productivity of the soil is promised in language that reads as though it had once immediately followed vs. 25. This is an oft-repeated note (Hos. 2:23, 24; Jer. 31:12; Ezek. 34:27, 29), and like the appeal to memory and shame in 31, 32 is probably late. 33-38, are two supplementary, loosely attached oracles: the 1st, 33-36, a promise of a rejuvenated land; the 2d, 37, 38, the assurance of an innumerable population (cf. 36:8-15).

36:16-21. The Captivity Justified. The people had defiled their ways, and were unclean (17), so the only recourse Yahweh had was to scatter them among the nations. But the nations concluded that Yahweh was too weak to defend his own people, and in this way Yahweh was profaned among them (cf. 20:9, 14, 22).

They defiled Palestine by their ways (17). The land suffered with the people, and was even made unclean by them (Gen. 3:18).

Uncleanness (17), is a word used for ceremonial defilement, which may be contracted by various contacts, as sex, blood, food, leprosy and dead bodies. It leans heavily toward the priestly ideal, and is a central idea in Lev. 17-26. Real danger was supposed to lurk in any of these forbidden contacts, and all of them, because of tradition, were extremely loathsome to the religiously minded (Lev. 15:19).

Blood poured on the ground (18), may refer to child sacrifice that was occasionally practised by these people (16:36; 23:37; Judges 11:30, 39). Filthy images as in 6:9; 8:10, et al., were idol figures that played a prominent part in the prevalent fertility worship in the country.

Profaned my holy name (20), has a theological, not an ethical, significance here. The nations concluded that the captivity proved the inferiority of Yahweh to the gods of the conqueror. According to the theory that might was the chief evidence of deity, such a conclusion would be correct. The writer concludes that to save his good name Yahweh must prove his power by redeeming his people from among the nations. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that prosperity was considered an evidence of the presence of God. My holy name, is a very definite expression of the transcendence of deity. Holy originally meant set apart, sepa-

22 Therefore say to the house of Israel,
Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Not for your
sakes, O house of Israel, am I acting,
but for my holy name, which you have
profaned among the nations, with whom
23 you dwell. So I will make sacred
my great name, profaned among the
nations, which you have profaned in
their midst, that the nations may know
that I am Yahweh, (Oracle of the
Lord Yahweh),[6] when, through you,
I shall be made sacred in their eyes.
24 For I will take you out of the nations,
and will gather you from all the countries,
and will bring you into your own
25 land. And I will sprinkle on you clean
water, and you shall be cleansed from
all your uncleanness, and I will cleanse
you from all your filthy images.
26 I will also give you a new heart, and
will put a new spirit within you, and
will remove your heart of stone from
your flesh, and will give you a heart of
27 flesh. Yes, my spirit I will put within
you, and this I will accomplish, that you
shall walk in my statutes, and observe
28 my ordinances, and practise them. And
you shall dwell in the land that I gave
your fathers, and you shall be my people,
and I will be your God.
29 And I will redeem you from all your
uncleanness, and I will call for the
grain and multiply it, and will not send
30 on you a famine. Also I will increase
the fruit of the tree and the produce
of the field, so that you may never
again suffer the reproach of famine
31 among the nations. Then you shall remember
your evil ways, and your deeds
that were not good, and you shall feel
nauseated because of your iniquities and
32 your abominations. Not for your sakes
am I acting, Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh,
let it be known to you. Be ashamed
and be confounded because of your
ways, O house of Israel.

33 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, In the day
when I cleanse you from all your iniquities,
I will cause you to inhabit the

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rated. Name was used to express character, being, and was believed to be a part of a person, the essence of the real person (cf. Gen. 32:28). My holy name, found 4 times in this chapter and 5 other places in the book, belongs chiefly to the P. code and Chronicles.

36:22-25. YAHWEH MUST REDEEM HIS PEOPLE FOR HIS HOLY NAME'S SAKE. Not for your sakes, follows up the theological interests of the previous section (cf. 20:9, 14; 22:16; 39:7). Yahweh's name is great among the nations (cf. Mal. 1:11, 14; Deut. 28:58; Ps. 8:2). The return was to be the sign of Yahweh's power.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you (25), brings to mind an old rite of purification. Though never fully described in the Old Testament, it is frequently mentioned (Gen. 35:4; Exod. 9:10; Numb. 8:7; Zech. 13:1; Exod. 30:18-20). No doubt such ceremonial ablutions were considered effective.

36:26-28. THE PROMISE OF A NEW HEART. The ideal underlying this promise is the antithesis of the above. There we find the ceremonial, the ritual emphasis of the priest; here we have the confidence of the mystic, who follows the *inner light* and looks askance at the forms and the conventions of the priest. This is in keeping with 11:19, 20; 18:30-32, and is akin to individualism which Ezekiel expresses so vigorously (3:19; 18:1-28; 33:10-16), and has been called the pearl of the book. The heart of flesh as over against the heart of stone (26), symbolized that which is most human, and responsive, especially emphasizing loyalties to divine statutes in contrast to cold-hearted indifference to the powers that be.

36:29-32. THE LAND WILL BE REGENERATED. The grain and the fruit will be multiplied (29, 30), a hope frequently expressed (Hos. 2:23; Jer. 31:12; Ezek. 34:27, 29), and will thus be ready for a cleansed people to return to and dwell therein forever. But they will remember and will be ashamed, and confounded (31, 32). This peculiar note is found elsewhere in late passages (cf. 16:63; 20:43). A disgust of past sins is an assurance of good conduct for the future.

36:33-38. THESE TWO ORACLES, 33-36, and 37, 38, both coming from a late period, have been safely tacked on, in

cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt,
34 and the waste land shall be cultivated
instead of being a desolation in the
35 sight of every passer-by. Then they
shall say, This land that was desolate,
has become like a garden of Eden, and
the ruined cities, and the waste and
broken down places are fortified, they
36 are inhabited. Then shall the nations
that remain round about you know, that
I Yahweh have rebuilt the broken down
places, I have planted the waste. I Yahweh
have spoken, and I will act.

37 Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Again will
I be asked by the house of Israel to do
something for them. I will multiply for
38 them men like sheep, like sheep set
apart for sacrifice, like the flock in
Jerusalem at her festivals. So shall the
ruined cities be full of men, a flock,
and they shall know that I am Yahweh.

37:1 The hand of Yahweh was on me and
he brought me out, (in the spirit of
Yahweh)[1] and set me down in the
midst of the valley, it being full of dry
2 bones. And he caused me to pass by
them, round about, and behold there
were very many on the surface of the
valley, and mark well, they were very
3 dry. He then said to me, Mortal man,
can these bones live? And I said O
4 (Lord) Yahweh, you know. Then he
said to me, Prophesy over these bones,
and say to them, O dry bones, Hear the
5 word of Yahweh. Thus says (Lord)
Yahweh to these bones, Behold, I am
about to put breath in you, and you
6 shall live. And I will put sinews on
you, and I will bring flesh up over
you, and I will cover you with skin,
and put breath in you, and you shall
live. Then you shall know that I am
Yahweh.

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an appropriate place by a careful editor. In the day (33), usually opens a message from the time when apocalypticism was in the air. Nothing of importance is found in either of these paragraphs. The 1st repeats, in no arresting way, the belief that the desolate land will again be fruitful. The 2d is confident that men will be as numerous as sheep at the time of the festivals. This is a restatement of 36:10, 11, and is a fair introduction to the following chapter.

Chapter 37

37:1-28. THE RESURRECTION AND RESTORATION OF ISRAEL has 2 major divisions. 1-14 has 3 sections: 1-11, the valley of dry bones, that will be made to live, interpreted (11); 12-13a, the graves will be opened, and Israel restored; 13b-14, an editorial repetition. 15-28, the 2 sticks, named Judah and Joseph, united, the symbol of the 2 nations united under my servant David forever. The literary quality, interest in detail, the matter-of-fact symbolism, the place visited, the valley (2), suggest the pen of Ezekiel. 1-11 comes from some time after the close of the siege of Jerusalem, and was written, possibly, not far from the ruins. 12-13a has a different theme, graves, not bleaching bones, the dispersion of the living, not the slaughtered city. It may also be the work of Ezekiel, but its arrangement here is the work of an editor, and it probably came from a date later than 1-11. The 2d major division, 15-28, may likewise belong to Ezekiel (cf. Introd. xlvi).

37:1-11. THE DRY BONES WILL LIVE, is one of the deservedly popular passages of the whole book. It is picturesque and at once grips the attention. Its application may be as wide as human need, and it is confident of the impossible. The rabbis interpreted it correctly, in the national sense, and from it inspired courage in hours of greatest despair. Justin, Jerome, and Tertullian, the post-apostolic fathers, found in it the foundation for personal immortality. To the early hearers, in their hour of ruin and dismay, it must have sounded strangely optimistic. The city was in ruins and the country ravished. Dry bones sprawled, white and gruesome, among the city débris, and in out-of-the-way places, hiding the last agony of friend or neighbor; and here was a heap, the dumb witness of futile heroism. The valley was full of them, and they were very dry.

7 So I prophesied as he commanded me,[2] and it happened (a voice)[3] while I was prophesying there was a rustling and the bones[4] came to-
8 gether, each one to his fellow. Even while I looked, behold sinews were on them, and flesh had come up, and skin covered[5] them over, but there was no
9 breath in them. Then he said to me, Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, O mortal man, and say to the breath, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, From the four winds, come O breath, and breathe into these slain ones, that they may live.
10 So I prophesied[6] even as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood up on their feet, a very great host.
11 Then he said to me, Mortal man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold they are saying, Our bones are dried up,(and)[7] our hope has perished, we are completely ruined.
12 Therefore prophesy and say to them, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh, Behold I am opening your graves, and am bringing you up from your graves,(my people)[8] and will bring you back to the
13 land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am Yahweh. I will indeed bring you up from your graves, O my people.
14 And I will put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will restore you to your land, that you may know that I am Yahweh. I have spoken and I will act. Oracle of Yahweh.

15 And the word of Yahweh came to me
16 as follows: O mortal man, you, yourself take a stick and write on it, Judah and his Israelitish allies, then take another[9] stick and write on it, Joseph

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We take this to be a statement of literal fact, with nothing of the visionary. So many had been slaughtered and so few remained that following 586 thousands of dead bodies must have been the prey for bird and beast around the ruins of Jerusalem. The archæologist sometimes deciphers for us the blurred page of the past. From ed-Duweir, the ancient Lachish, is reported the find of some 700 skeletons thrown promiscuously in a heap during the siege of that city in 701. (PEFQ. July, and Oct., 1936.) It only bears out the grim stories that are preserved in the O. T., of which the most gruesome of all is the burial of Gog, which would require some 7 months of arduous labor (Ezek. 39: 11-16).

The hand of Yahweh (1), used earlier, 1: 3; 3: 14; 8: 3; et al., indicates the presence of the divine spirit (cf. Com. 1: 3 and Introd. xv). The *spirit of Yahweh,* here quite superfluous, may be an editorial intimation that the prophet was believed to be the subject of peculiar experiences, in which he had strange visions. The valley is the same as that in 3: 22 (q. v).

Can these bones live (3)? There was only one answer, either for the bones or for the nation whom they symbolized: humanly it was impossible.

37: 7-10. So I prophesied, . . and there was a rustling, . . and they came to life . . . a very great host. The picture is complete and needs no elaboration. It is a symbol and the interpretation follows.

These bones are the whole house of Israel (11). The nation was so completely wiped out that there was no hope. Here is expressed the daring confidence of a great prophet. The dispersed, despoiled nation will become a great host. The question of individual immortality is neither raised nor settled here. Only in later Jewish writings do the foregleams of that appear (cf. Isa. 26: 19; Dan. 12: 2). Nor does this indicate whether the captives, or those left in the land, or both, would be the nucleus of the new nation. Yahweh, himself, was the hope.

37: 12-14. THE GRAVES WILL BE OPEN AND ISRAEL RESTORED. This is a new symbol, quite unrelated to the dry bones, and it introduces a different, though a kindred, question. It is the assurance that the dispersed will be brought back to the land of Israel (12-13a). The graves, are equivalent to the exile, or the abode among foreign peoples, where, in a sense, they were outside of the realm of Yahweh.

37: 15-28. THE TWO NATIONS WILL BE RESTORED AND UNITED INTO ONE KING-

(stick of Ephraim) [10] and all his allies
17 of the house of Israel. Then bring them
together, each to the other, that they
may be a single stick in your hand.[11]
18 Then when the children of my people
say to you as follows: Will you not
interpret to us, what you mean by these?
19 Say to them, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Behold I am about to take the
stick of Joseph, which is in the hand
of Ephraim, and the Israelitish tribes,
his allies, and I will place them on the
stick of Judah, and will make them a
single stick, and they shall be united in
20 my hand. And let the sticks on which
you write be in your hand, before their
eyes.

21 And say to them, Thus says the Lord
Yahweh, Behold I am taking the children
of Israel from among the nations
whither they have gone, and I will
gather them from round about, and will
22 bring them back to their land. Then I
will make them one nation in the land,
in the hill-country of Israel, and one
king shall be over all of them, (as a
king) [12] and never again shall there
be two nations, nor shall they ever
again be separated into two kingdoms,
23 (ever),[13] nor shall they ever again
pollute themselves with their filthy images,
or with their detestable things, or
with any of their transgressions. But I
will deliver them from all their backslidings,
in which they have sinned, and
will purify them, and they shall be my
24 people, and I will be their God. My
servant David shall rule over them, and
there shall be one shepherd for all of
them. They shall walk in my ordinances
and observe my statutes, and
25 practise them. And they shall dwell in
the land that I gave to my servant
Jacob, in which their fathers [14] dwelt.
Yes, they and their sons and their grandsons
shall dwell in it forever, David
my servant being their prince forever.
26 And I will make with them a covenant
of peace, it shall be a covenant with
them for ever, (and I will give them
and I will multiply them) [15] and will
place my sanctuary in their midst for-
27 ever. My dwelling place shall be with
them, and I will be their God, and they
28 shall be my people. Then shall the
nations know that I am Yahweh, who
sanctifieth Israel when my sanctuary is
in their midst forever.

DOM UNDER MY SERVANT DAVID. The symbolism reminds us of chapters 4 and 5, and the interest in details, and the use of the rhetorical question (18), suggest that we are in the company of the man after whom the book was named. The schism in the nation, so long lamented by the prophets (Hosea 2:2; 3:5; Micah 2:12; cf. Amos 9:11), and so disastrous to national existence, will be healed. The two sticks will be united and will be held together in the hand of Yahweh, in whom alone was their hope (17, 19). Judah with all her allies or associates, and Joseph with all his allies are inclusive of all the clans, north and south (20-22).

I will purify them (23), along with a number of words in this verse, reminds us of 36:25, 29, and is a necessary preparation for the hoped-for kingdom. Religion is the basis of union for the kingdom.

My servant David the king (24), as in earlier messages (34:23, 24; 37:27), is the shepherd under Yahweh, who is supreme.

The covenant of peace (26), which Yahweh will make with them, is the climax of hope for a weary, war-ridden people (cf. 16:20; 34:25; Jer. 32:40-44; Isa. 55:3-5), and my sanctuary in their midst will be the sign and the seal of the divine presence (27, 28). This is continued in 39:21-29.

Chapter 38

38:1–39:20. GOG AND HIS ARMY WILL BE ANNIHILATED. In the last 2 chapters of this section of the book there are 2 distinct divisions. The 2d, 39:21-29, links up directly with 37:28, while the 1st, 38:1–39:20, is an independent literary unit, standing quite apart from all the rest of the book. In it there are repetitions, such as 38:1-4 and 39:1-2; 38:13 and 39:6, and scribal glosses, but parallel recensions seem to be far-fetched (cf. Introd. ix). The analysis is simple: 38:1-9, Gog and his

38:1 And the word of Yahweh came to me
2 as follows: Mortal man turn your face toward [1] Gog, (the land of Magog) [2] chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and
3 prophesy against him, and say, Thus says the Lord Yahweh, Behold I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of
4 Meshech and Tubal, and I will turn you round and put hooks in your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them armed completely, a great host, with shield and buckler, all of them swords-
5 men. (Paras, Cush and Put with them,

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army mustered against Israel; 10-13, Gog plots to destroy the peaceful people; 14-16, Gog will come against them; 17-23, Gog will be destroyed by the power of Yahweh, in earthquake, panic, fire, and brimstone; 39:1-8, Gog will be roused up against Israel, and slaughtered by Yahweh; 9-10, Gog's war-weapons will be burned; 11-16, Gog's multitude will be buried in Abarim; 17-20, Gog's army will be a sacrificial feast for bird and beast. 39:21-29, quite unconscious of the annihilation of world nations, announces that the glory of Yahweh will be established among the nations, 21-24, and that the captivity of the whole house of Israel will be brought back from the countries of their enemies, 25-29.

These chapters are eschatological, that is, they deal with last things. In some features, as the overwhelming defeat of the nations (38:19-20; 39:3-6), they are markedly so. Other eschatological features, such as the phrases, the latter days (38:16), in that day (38:19), the day (38:14, 18, 19; 39:11, 13), and the distinction between this evil age and the age that is to be, and the outline of the next world, are mentioned incidentally or omitted altogether. Also, most of these characteristics appear earlier, either in preexilic or exilic literature. The day of Yahweh is an old conception, certainly pre-Israelitish (Amos 5:18-20; Hosea 2:18, 20; Micah 2:4; Isa. 17:4, 7; Ezek. 7:12, 20; 28:6-10; 32:3-5, 17-21; Zeph. 1:10-18; 3:16). The destruction of national enemies had long been a popular hope (Numb. 23:7-10; Nahum 1:1-6), and confidence in national restoration followed hard on the heels of national defeat (Jer. 28:2-4; 23:5, 6; Ezek. 17:22-24; 21:27; 34:23-31; 37:21-28).

Hence these chapters register a step in the development of the idea of *last things*. In the earlier chapters of the book an occasional expression shows kinship to some of the phrases and hopes here presented. But on the whole the material is largely foreign to Ezekiel, and finds its closest parallels in later literature.

It should be noted that these chapters are mildly apocalyptic. Symbols are not used, nor is there a pseudonym as author, but they are pessimistic as to the present world-order, and Yahweh will intervene in a great catastrophe to accomplish his purpose (38:19, 20; 39:3-6). A sacrificial banquet in which birds and beasts participate concludes the utter destruction of the enemy (39:17-20). As such, these chapters prepare the way for the great apocalypses found in Isa. 24-27; Daniel, and the books of Enoch of later date.

38:1-9. GOG AND HIS HOSTS WILL INVADE PALESTINE. Gog is the name of the leader of the great multitude from the north summoned by Yahweh to fulfil his purpose. The name has been variously interpreted. Some have found its meaning in Gug, an early Sumerian name of a god, the leader of the forces of darkness (Van Hoonacker, Z. A., 1914, 336). This runs us back into mythology, most of which is rooted in the idea of creation, in which the forces of the underworld, or darkness, and those of the upper world came into conflict. This conflict was believed to run through all nature and history, and would end in a final clash between the two hostile powers. This offers a fair background for much of the Old Testament eschatology. But it would

6 all with buckler and sword) [3] Gomer
and all her hordes, the house of Togarmah
[4] from the far north, and all his
7 hosts, many people with them. Ready,
set yourself in array, you and all your
host, those gathered around you, and
you shall be an outpost for me.[5]
8 You shall be mustered out after many
days; at the end of the years you shall
come against [1] the land, restored from
desolation,[6] gathered out from many
peoples, against the hill-country of Israel
which was a complete desolation,
but she has been brought out from peoples,
and all of them live in security.
9 Then you shall go up like the storm,
and come like a cloud that covers the
land, you and all your hordes, and the
multitude of people with you.[7]
10 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, On that
day, schemes will come into your mind,
11 and you shall lay an evil plot: for you
will say, I will go up against the
land of unwalled villages, I will go
against [8] those who are peaceable, living
in security, all of them living with-

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require that the name Gug be preserved in popular thought, and for this we have no evidence beyond this passage. Other explanations challenge. Gog is taken by some as the Hebrew adaptation of Gyges, king of Lydia, the Gugu of the Assyrian monuments, who won fame as the conqueror of Midas, and founded a great kingdom in Asia Minor around 670 (Edw. Meyer *Gesch. des Alterthums* I, I, 464). Gog, whose grandson Alyattes was ruling at the beginning of the 6th century B. C., may have become the popular name for the dynasty, that belonged to the north, and had spread terror far and wide. That is, the danger came from the north, where forces had been gathering from the time of the Scythians, in 650, down to the conquest under Alexander the Great. To accept that theory calls for a date when Egypt had passed the zenith of her power, and the Babylon of Nebuchadrezzar had gone from history or was on the wane.

Alexander himself, and his armies, have been understood to be the invaders referred to here. (H. Winckler *Altorientalische Forschungen* I, 160-176). But the Jew of that day would scarcely think of Alexander as an enemy. To them he was a deliverer, a saviour.

More important is the theory that under the guise of Gog, the writer launched an attack on Nebuchadrezzar and the Babylonian army (Hermann, 48). Symbolism such as that implied by this interpretation was an easy device to avoid unpleasant results. It was a principle of apocalypticism thus to use figures, numbers, and names to indicate the enemy. Thus with impunity they could consign the powers that be to destruction. Did a prophet like Ezekiel, in this cryptic fashion, utter his convictions concerning the ultimate downfall of Babylonia? Jeremiah was confident that the end of Babylon was not far distant, and expressed this in the letter he wished sunk in the Euphrates as soon as read (Jer. 51: 59-64). Ezekiel may have been of the same mind, but the details of this picture fit the Scythian or northern hordes much better than the Babylonian army.

Such a variety of interpretations, and others not mentioned, commends caution, yet, it seems that in these chapters, there are local experiences that have been worked into a mythological pattern. Gog probably stands for the leader of the great hordes of northern barbarians that had swept the country previously, and that again seemed to be gathering on the horizon, ready for another invasion. But behind and beyond all were the great unknown, supernatural powers, that in the last day would engage in conflict with Yahweh and his hosts. Is Gog, then, the Gyges of Lydia, or Gugu, the Sumerian deity of darkness? Both, if you will. The forces in history and those that lay beyond history were united, and Yahweh would sweep all off the field of battle.

The land of Magog is very indefinite (2). In Gen. 10: 2 and 1 Chron. 1: 5, it is the name of a son of Japheth. In

**12 out walls, or bars, or gates, to take
spoil and carry off booty, to turn your
power against the desolate places, now
inhabited, even against [1] people gathered
from among the nations, who have
acquired cattle and merchandise, and
are dwelling in the centre of the earth.
13 Sheba and Dedan and their merchants,[9]
Tarshish and all her traders
will say to you, Have you come for
spoil? Have you assembled your horde
to carry off booty? to plunder silver
and gold, to carry off cattle and merchandise,
to gather much spoil?
14 Therefore prophesy, O mortal man, and
say to Gog, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
In that day when my people Israel are
living in security, assuredly you shall
15 rouse yourself up,[10] and come from
your place, from the far away north, you
accompanied by many people all of them
mounted on horses, a great horde, a vast
16 army; and you shall come up against
my people Israel, like a cloud that
covers the earth. This shall happen in
the latter days. Surely I will bring you
against my land, so that the nations may
know me when I sanctify myself in you,
before their eyes (Gog).
17 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, Are you
not he of whom I spoke in former days
through my servants, the prophets of Israel,
who were prophesying during those
days and years,[12] that you would
18 come against them? And on that day,
the day when Gog comes against the
land of Israel,—Oracle of the Lord Yahweh—,
19 then my fury shall rage; indeed
in my jealousy, in the heat of my anger,
I have spoken. On that day, there shall
be a great earthquake in the land of
20 Israel, so that the fish of the sea, and**

Rev. 20: 8, Gog and Magog are the names of 2 peoples. Josephus speaks of them as the people whom the Greeks call Scythians (Jos. Ant. I, VI, 1). It may have been the name for a region in Asia Minor, of which we have no indication of boundaries.

Rosh, in the Hebrew, is not the name of a northern people, such as Russian, as sometimes translated, but is an adjective, qualifying prince.

Meshech and Tubal are the names of groups in Cappadocia, between the Black Sea and the Taurus Mountains, known from the Assyrian annals as early as the 12th century before the Christian era (cf. 27: 13; 32: 26).

I will put hooks in your jaws (4), reflects the language of 29: 4, and Gog, like a huge fish, is controlled by Yahweh who brings him and his army from the north to Palestine.

These names (5), belong to nations in the south and can have no place here. A scribe familiar with 27: 10 and 29: 10, attached them to this list of northern peoples.

Gomer and her hordes (6), stand for Gimirra of the Assyrian, the Cimmerian of the Greeks, known to us as the Scythian people. Their early center was north of the Euxine Sea, but by 600, they had entered and overrun Cappadocia. Genesis 10: 2 relates them to the Greeks.

The house of Togarmah, in tradition, was related to Gomer (Gen. 10: 3), and her people were famous horse-dealers (Ezek. 27: 14). In Assyrian inscriptions from 725, a people of similar name, Tilgarimnu, are located north of the Taurus Mountains. Naturally, in these documents, race relations and boundary lines are of a popular rather than of an exact, technical nature. They are, nevertheless, of great value both geographically and historically.

After many days (8), and at the end of the years, are indications of the indefiniteness of the movement that was on the horizon, to the mind of the writer. A prevailing theory was that in the latter days history was to be brought to an end by a great cataclysm. The northern hordes were restless, and had been so for a century or more. These surely were the agents of the coming disaster. Surely Yahweh, the commander-in-chief of the armies of the nations, was stirring them up. He had already given the command, Ready, set yourself in array. But race invasions, though irresistible, were slow in culminating. Most of the Apocalypticists were careful about committing themselves to definite dates. The

the fowl of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all mankind, who are on the face of the earth shall tremble before me; the mountains shall be torn down and the precipices shall topple over and every wall shall
21 fall to the ground. And I will call against him every terror;[13]—Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh—, the sword of each
22 man shall be against his fellow. And I shall judge him, with plague and with blood, and an overwhelming flood; and hailstones, fire and brimstone I will rain on him, and on his hordes, and on the
23 many peoples with him. Thus will I show my power, and will sanctify myself, and will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am Yahweh.

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end is at hand, it comes, are frequent phrases, but if it tarry wait for it, is the injunction of wisdom (Hab. 2:3).

Restored from desolation (8), and similar phrases, indicate that recovery from a great catastrophe had begun, and she has been brought out from many peoples, attests a return from captivity, at least, of some of the people. But inasmuch as they were dwelling in security, living without walls (11), they apparently lacked much in the way of national organization. Such a condition scarcely existed earlier than 500, and it may have been much later.

38:10-13. GOG PLOTS AGAINST PEACEFUL ISRAEL. This is the reverse side of the previous section. There and in 39:1-8, Yahweh stirs up the enemy. Here it is of his own initiative. Divine sovereignty and human free-will presented no problem to the writer. Man was responsible for all his acts, and yet, eternal wisdom ruled his destiny. The economic and national situation is the same here as above.

To take spoil and carry off booty (12), was the sin of Gog. Unrighteousness in commerce and eagerness for riches were considered antagonistic to religion, and were consequently condemned (28:4, 6, 18).

Sheba, Dedan and Tarshish (13), like vs. 5, is an echo from the oracles against Tyre (cf. 27:12, 20, 22, 25).

38:14-16. GOG WILL COME; I WILL BRING HIM. To the foregoing predictions this adds a note of certainty, and more definitely describes the coming multitudes. Mounted on horses, a vast army, like a cloud they cover the earth. This is very similar to the picture we have of the Scythians, who overran the country at an earlier date (Herod. 1:103-5).

38:17-23. GOG WILL BE DESTROYED, such had been the prediction of former prophets. This has a literary basis in Jer. 4:23-26, but the application is entirely different (cf. Zeph. 3:8; Hosea 4:3; Isa. 17:12; Micah 4:11-13). The reference to the prophets of Israel who had predicted the coming of Gog is extremely vague. Our canonical prophets contain nothing that can be specifically taken as pointing to this invasion. True, many passages may be twisted into something that resembles such an identification. Jerome, to his own satisfaction, found in the Greek translation of Numbers 24:7 all he wanted. It reads, "This king shall be higher than Gog," Agag having lost the A in the process of translation. But such wresting of phrases from their context in support of private views is not for edification.

My fury shall rage, etc. (19), in earthquake, plague, blood, flood, hailstone, fire, and brimstone (20-22, cf. 13:11, 13; Exod. 9:24; 12:29); all are the evidences of the anger of Yahweh (vss. 19, 22; Jer. 10:22) against the invader, and completely destroy him. Such a cataclysm, to a people who had no conception of the operation of natural law, would be the incontrovertible evidence that a just God was punishing a guilty people. With a wider outlook, and some knowledge of natural science, we have the serious problem of reconciling such catastrophes with the moral order of the

39:1 And you, mortal man, prophesy against
Gog and say, Thus says (Lord) Yahweh,
Behold I am against [1] you O Gog, chief
2 prince of Meshech and Tubal, and I
will turn you round and bring you
out [2] and cause you to come up from
the far north, and I will bring you
3 against the hill-country of Israel. Then
I will strike your bows from your left
hand, and cause your arrows to fall
4 from your right; you and all your
hordes, and the people with you shall
fall in the hill-country of Israel. To
ravenous birds of every kind and the
beasts of the field, I will give you as
5 food. In the open country you shall
fall, for I have spoken. Oracle of
6 (Lord) Yahweh. And I will send fire
against Gog,[3] and against those living
in security on the coast-lands, that they
7 may know that I am Yahweh. And my
holy name will I make known in the
midst of my people Israel; and I will
not permit my holy name to be profaned
any more, and the nations shall
know that I Yahweh am holy in Israel.
8 Behold it comes, and it shall be done.
Oracle of the Lord Yahweh. This is
the day of which I have spoken.
9 And the inhabitants of the cities of Israel
shall go out and make fires and burn
the war-weapons, the buckler and shield,
the bows and arrows, the clubs and
spears; they shall make fires with these
10 for seven years. So that they shall carry
no wood from the open country, nor
cut down any from the forest, for with
war-weapons they shall kindle fires.
Thus shall they spoil their spoilers, and
plunder those who plundered them. Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh.
11 And in that day I will give Gog a renowned
[4] place, a grave in Israel, the
valley of Abarim, east of the sea, and
they shall stop up [5] the valley; and
there shall they bury Gog and all his
rabble, and shall name it the valley
12 of Rabble-Gog. And for seven months
the house of Israel shall bury them in
13 order to purify the land. Indeed, all the
people of the land shall bury them,[6]
and it shall be an honor to them on the
day [7] when I reveal my glory. Oracle
of (Lord) Yahweh.
14 And they shall set apart, permanently,
men who are to inspect the land, in
order to bury [8] (those who inspect) [9]
those who are left on the surface of the
ground, to cleanse it. After the end
of seven months, they shall continue
15 search. And these who inspect the land
shall go over it, and when one sees a
human bone, he shall erect beside it a
pillar until the grave-diggers bury it in
16 the valley of Rabble-Gog. And also the
name of the city shall be Rabble. So
shall they purify the land.

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universe. To earlier peoples God made himself known and sanctified himself in such manifestations (23).

Chapter 39

39:1-8. GOG IS ROUSED UP TO DESTROY ISRAEL. Vss. 1, 2, repeat 38:1-4, and the section reexpresses the destruction of Gog (cf. 38:1-9, 17-23). This slaughter, so terrible that it made all Palestine a shambles, was the war to end war. It was to the writer the convincing evidence that Yahweh was the holy one of Israel (6-8). That such carnage (17-20) could be thought to produce such results (7, 8) seems strange. It is probable that phrases such as, my holy name, shall know that I Yahweh am holy in Israel, and the nations shall know that I am Yahweh, had by repeated use become so conventional as to have been robbed of all content. In the same way pious phrases actually degenerate into blasphemies.

39:9-16. GOG'S WAR-WEAPONS WERE SO NUMEROUS that they would suffice for the fires for 7 years; and the carcasses were so many that all Israel would be at work 7 months burying them (11-16). Even then inspectors would need to be appointed to see that the bones were removed, so that the land should not be polluted.

The valley of Abarim (11), east of the sea, presents some perplexity. There is a Mount Abarim, east of the Jordan (Num. 27:12; 33:47), but no valley of that name is known. Probably it was intended in a mythological rather than in a geographical sense. The valley of *those who pass beyond,* is a possible translation, and would thus refer to Sheol

17 And you, mortal man, thus says the
(Lord) Yahweh, Say to every kind of
bird and to all the beasts of the field,
Be assembled and come, gather from
round about to my sacrifice, that I am
sacrificing for you, a great sacrifice on
the hill-country of Israel, that you may
18 eat flesh and drink blood; the flesh
of warriors you shall eat, and the blood
of the princes of the earth you shall
drink, rams, lambs, and he goats, oxen,
19 fatlings of Bashan, all of them. And
you shall eat fat to satiety, and drink
blood to drunkenness from my sacrifice
20 that I sacrifice for you. And at my
table you shall be filled, horses and
riders, warriors and all men of war.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

21 So will I establish my glory among
the nations, and all the nations shall see
my judgment that I execute, and my
22 power that I lay on them. Also, the
house of Israel shall know that I am
Yahweh their God, from that day for-
23 ward. And the nations shall know that
for their iniquity the house of Israel
went into captivity, because they trans-
gressed against me, and I hid my face
from them, and gave them into the
power of their adversaries, so that they
24 all fell by the sword. I did to them
according to their uncleanness, and their
transgressions, and I hid my face from
them.

25 Therefore, thus says the Lord Yah-
weh, Now will I return the captivity of
Jacob, and I will have mercy on the
whole house of Israel, and I will be
26 jealous for my holy name. And they
shall forget [10] their shame, and all
their transgressions that they trans-
gressed against me, when they lived in
security in their land, no one making
27 them afraid. When I bring them back
from the peoples, and gather them from
the countries of their enemies, then I
will sanctify myself in the eyes of many
28 nations, and they shall know that I am

or the underworld, the entrance to which lay through the grave. This is what we should expect in eschatology (cf. 28:8-10; 31:14-17). They shall stop up the valley, in the Greek is rendered, "and they shall build up the mouth of the valley round about," implies that contact with the place of the dead must be completely avoided, as it was defiling.

For 7 months (12), like the 7 years in vs. 9, carries the idea of completeness, and may indicate a priestly interest on the part of the writer. The people of the land, at a late period, was the equivalent for laymen as opposed to the priesthood (cf. Sir. 50:19). It is probably used in that sense here, as the priest, early in the post-exilic period, must have been set apart from the ordinary menial tasks of life. Moffatt translates it, all the natives. It shall be an honor to them on the day when I reveal my glory, attaches a reward to the burial of the enemy. It was a kindly as well as a religious act. It purified the land of Israel and it rested the troubled spirits of the slain.

Inspectors were appointed to carry out the program of purification (13). A new type of work would call into being a new class of officers. So, we find in chapter 44:10-27 a division among the priesthood because of the increasing complexities of worship.

39:17-20. Gog's Army Becomes a Sacrificial Feast for Bird and Beast. The logical order of this chapter should be, 1-8 the slaughter, 17-20 the feast; 11-16 the bodies buried, and 9-10 the weapons burned, but sequence in the development of a plot never seriously hampered an Oriental. The feast is a revolting sight, and must have been conceived in the heat of passion against an enemy. It has little of what a later Jew described as pure religion and undefiled before God (cf. James 1:27).

39:21-29. The Glory of Yahweh Will Be Established Among the Nations (21-24), and the return of the captivity (25-29), are quite oblivious of all the eschatological material, and hark back to 37:28, forming a proper ending for the second main division of the book (chaps. 25-37). The exile was due to the iniquity and uncleanness of Israel; the restoration will be due to the mercy of God. The people will forget their

Yahweh their God, because though I sent them into captivity among the nations, I now gather them to their own land, and I will leave none of them
29 there any more. Nor will I again hide my face from them, because I have poured out my spirit on the house of Israel. Oracle of the Lord Yahweh.

40:1 In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, on the first month of the year, the tenth day of the month, that is, the fourteenth year after the city had been smitten, on that very day, the hand of Yahweh was on me, and he brought me
2 (there),[1] in supernatural visions (he brought me)[1a] to the land of Israel, and let me down on a very high mountain on which, in front of me [2] was a
3 construction like a city. Then he brought me thither, and lo! there standing by the gate, was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a line of flax, and a measuring rod in his hand.

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shame and their transgressions and Yahweh shall never again hide his face from them. His spirit is poured out on the house of Israel. In this lay the hope of that type of life that was acceptable to Yahweh, and hence guaranteed his presence and power in the midst of his people. This is in keeping with the outlook of later days (cf. Joel 2:28; Zech. 12:10; and Ezek. 36:25-31).

THE FOURTH MAIN DIVISION

40:1–48:35. Reconstruction of the New Religious Community, a State-Church.

40:1–48:35. THE TEMPLE VISION. In this, the 4th main division of the book, there are 4 subdivisions: (1) 40:1–43:27, a description of the new temple; (2) 44:1–46:24, the regulations for officials and offerings in the new temple; (3) 47:1-23, the land of Palestine; renewal of the soil, and the boundaries; (4) 48:1-35, the new state-church, and tribal boundaries. The booklet is well ordered, though there are some interpolations, and occasionally the scribe has doubled on his tracks. Though devoid of literary quality, it is the product of the study. It greatly differs from the earlier sections of the book, in that there is no action, no poetic outbursts, and though there is intolerance, frantic denunciations are absent.

Chapter 40

(1) 40:1–43:27. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW TEMPLE divides naturally into seven sections. 40:1-4, the writer's credentials; 5-27, description of the outer court; 28-47, the inner court and the gateways; 40:48–41:26, the temple and the buildings; 42:1-20, subsidiary buildings; 43:1-12, Yahweh's entry, and 43:13-27, the altar of burnt-offering.

40:1-4. THE WRITER'S CREDENTIALS. The date given, if, as is usual, the Babylonian year cycle that began in the spring be followed, is April, 572 B. C. Here as in 1:1-3, a double dating system is used. In this case, one is from the first captivity, 597, and the other from the second 586. It is also emphatic, the *selfsame* day. This betokens the eagerness of one or more scribes to assure the reader that the booklet is authentic. The date is the culmination of the chronological scheme of the book, and characteristic phrases, significant among which is the late, priestly word selfsame, bind them all together (1:1-3; 8:1; 33:21). While no name is found in this division, the implication is that Ezekiel is the author.

Supernatural visions (2), are invoked to furnish credentials for the author (cf. 1:1; 8:1). This and phrases such as *the hand of Yahweh was on me*, reminding us of 1:3; 3:14; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1, imply a strange spiritual experience, quite abnormal, such as those reported in the earlier chapters. Underlying all this is a definite type of theological thought. The editor, like many of us, was inclined to think that the abnormal and the inexplicable more clearly demonstrated the power of God than the normal. But sometimes, it seems that in-

4 Then the man said to me, Mortal man, look carefully, and listen intently, and pay attention to everything I am showing you, for I came [3] here in order to show you. Tell everything that you see to the house of Israel.

5 And lo! a wall was on the outside, round about the temple buildings. Now in the man's hand was a measuring rod, ten feet six inches long, each cubit was twenty-one inches, and he measured the thickness and the height of the structure, and each was ten feet six inches.

6 Then he came to the gate that faced the east, and went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gate, ten feet six inches wide (and the threshold was one, one rod wide).[4]

7 And the length of each of the guard-rooms was ten feet six inches, and its breadth was ten feet six inches, and the space between the guard-rooms was eight feet nine inches. And the threshold of the gate, at the side of the portico, that is the gate on the inside, was

8 ten feet six inches. (He measured also

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sistence on the supernatural element is proportioned to the barrenness of the product. While lofty ideals are presented in the following chapters, there is not a little that smacks of the ordinary routine of normal, priestly activity, nor on that account is it less valuable.

The 10th day of the 1st month (2) was significant in the ecclesiastical year of the Jews. This was the day on which the paschal lamb had to be selected, and was celebrated as the day of their redemption from Egypt (Exod. 12: 1-14). Also the sacred historian found that it was on the same day that the ancestors had gained their entrance into the promised land (Josh. 4: 19). Nothing could be happier than that on a day of such achievement there should be such a dream for the future.

On a very high mountain (2), as well as other topographical features of these chapters, though not definite, has a Palestinian background.

The man whose appearance was like bronze (3), was not Yahweh, for he had just conducted the author to this spot, but he was a heavenly being, the interpreter of Yahweh, an intermediary between God, who was becoming far removed from mankind, and man. He was the bearer of a revelation. To identify him with the man with the inkhorn in chapter 9: 2, might be going beyond that warranted by the material, but their functions were somewhat similar. Both were agents for Deity, and in both cases we have a priestly rather than a prophetic conception of the relation between God and man. This man was the guide for the writer, who was to be the Moses to his people. The line of flax and the measuring rod remind us of Zech. 2: 1-5, but as such was a commonplace in any civilization, there is no need to assume one borrowed from the other.

Mark well (4), and tell the house of Israel, is the announcement of priestly propaganda for this vision. His credentials are here vouched for, and to him the house of Israel should listen. Then follow the ideals for the propaganda (cf. 44: 5).

40: 5-16. THE OUTER GATEWAY ON THE EAST SIDE, is described. The wall beside which they stood was 10½ feet high and 10½ feet broad. The measuring rod was 6 cubits long, and the cubit was 1 cubit and a hand's breadth, which was approximately 21 inches—actually 20.67 inches. The rod is usually taken as 10½ feet, while it actually was slightly shorter. Hence the measurements given in feet and inches are only an approximation. The guide mounted the 7 steps to the entrance which was 10½ feet wide. The eastern approach, in many ancient temples, as well as in many modern churches, often assumed considerable importance. Among people who were sun-worshipers, or who had been influenced by it, facing the sun in certain parts of the ritual was essential. Many sanctuaries have been so oriented that, at certain seasons of the year, the first beams of the morning sun pierce the eastern door and enter

the portico of the gate on the inside ten
9 feet six inches).[5] Then he measured
the portico of the gateway fourteen feet,
and its posts were three feet six inches,
and the portico of the gate was on the
10 inside. And the guard-rooms of the
gateway on the east side, three on each
side, all three were of the same measurement;
and the posts on each side were
of the same measurement.
11 Then he measured the width of the
gateway, thirty-five feet, and the length
of the gateway was twenty-two feet nine
12 inches. And there was a border in
front of the guard-rooms, on this side
and on that,[6] each one twenty-one
inches, and each guard-room was ten
13 feet six inches square. Then he measured
the gate, from the back of one
guard-room to the back of another was
forty-three feet nine inches from door to
14 door. (Then he made the post one hundred
and five feet, and the court
abutted the post round about the
15 gate).[7] And from [8] the face of the
gate at the entrance to [8] the inside
face of the gate, it was eighty-seven feet
16 six inches. And latticed windows were in
the guard-rooms, and on [9] their posts
on the inside, round about the gate, also
to the portico; and there were windows
round about on the inside, and on
each post were palm trees.

17 Then he brought me into the outer
court, and lo! there were chambers, and
a mosaic pavement (made)[10] round
about the outer court. Thirty chambers
18 were on [9] the pavement, and the pavement
abutted the gates; equal to the
length of the gates was the lower pavement.
19 Then he measured the width of the
outer court, from in front of the lower
gate to the front of the inner court on
the outside, one hundred and seventy-
20 five feet, then he brought me [11] northward,
and he measured the gateway of
the outer court, that faced northward,
21 both its length and its breadth. And
it had three guard-rooms on each side,
and its posts and its portico were of
the same measurement as that of the
first gateway. Its length was eighty-seven
feet six inches and its breadth was
22 forty-three feet nine inches. Also its
windows, and its portico and its palm
trees were of the same measurement as
those of the gateway facing east; and
they went up by seven steps, and its
portico was in front.
23 Now there was a gate on the inner

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the inner shrine, falling on some symbol of the god. Later the function of this gate in the mind of the author is made clear (42:15; 43:1, 4; 44:1).

This gateway, or gate-house, is described in detail, though some parts are obscure, and here and there the text is corrupt. The general structure is as follows. There were 7 steps up to the door, indicating that the main buildings were on a raised platform. The entrance was 10½ feet wide, and the hallway from the outer face of the outside wall to the inner face of the inside wall of the hallway was 87½ feet. This hallway, or corridor, was flanked by 6 guard-rooms, 3 on either side. These were 10½ feet square, separated each from its neighbor, on the side, by a decorated space of 8¾ feet. A window, with latticework, to provide the needed light, was furnished each. The dimensions of the gateway, overall, were 87½ by 43¾ feet. Similar in all respects to the gateway on the east, was one on the north, and another on the south.

The function of these guard-rooms, while in no place explicitly stated, clearly was to prevent undesirables, either of race or character, from entering and thus contaminating the sanctuary. Something of the same kind was probably in the temple of Solomon, according to an episode reported in 2 Chron. 12:11.

40:17-27. THE OUTER COURT IS DESCRIBED. This was entered through any one of the 3 gateways, east, north or south, described in the foregoing paragraph. It was on the same level as the outer gateways, that is, on a platform as high as the 7 steps of the entrance. Inside the wall a mosaic pavement ran all around, its inner edge being even with the inner faces of the outer gates. On this pavement, apparently with their backs to the wall, were 30 chambers,

court, opposite the gate of the north and
of the south, respectively, and he measured
from gate to gate, one hundred
and seventy-five feet.
24 Then he took me toward the south,
and lo, there was a gateway toward the
south, and he measured the posts and
the portico, and the measurements were
25 as those. And there were windows in
it and in the portico, all round about,
like those windows; eighty-seven feet
six inches long and forty-three feet nine
26 inches broad; and seven steps went up
to it, and the portico was in front of
them; and on the posts on either side
27 were palm trees. Also there was a
gateway to the inner court toward the
south. And he measured from gate to
gate toward the south, one hundred and
seventy-five feet.
28 Then he brought me to the inner
court through the south gateway, and he
measured the southern gateway, the
29 measurements were like those. And its
guard-rooms and its portico were the
same measurements. Also windows were
in it, and in its portico round about.
Its length was eighty-seven feet six
inches, and its breadth forty-three feet
30 nine inches. (And porticos were round
about it forty-three feet nine inches long
and eight feet six and a half inches
31 broad).[12] And its porticos were
toward the outer court and on its posts
were palm trees, and it had a flight of
eight steps.
32 Then he brought me to the inner
court toward the east, and he measured
the gateway; the measurements were
33 as those. And the guard-rooms and its
posts, and portico were as the measurements
of those; and there were windows
to it and to the portico round about.
Its length was eighty-seven feet six
inches, and its breadth forty-three feet
34 nine inches. And its portico was toward
the outer court, and on the posts on
each side were palm trees; and it had a
flight of eight steps.
35 Then he brought me to the north
gate, and he measured like those measurements.
36 The guard-rooms, its posts,
and its portico, and there were windows
round about. Its length was eighty-seven
feet six inches, and its breadth
37 forty-three feet nine inches. And its
posts were toward the outer court; and
on its posts on each side were palm
trees; and it had a flight of eight steps.
38. And a chamber and its door was by
the posts at the gates, there they washed
39 the burnt-offering. And by the portico
of the gate, were two tables on each
side, on which to slay the burnt-offering,
and the sin-offering and the trespass-offering.
40 And on the outside, on one side of
the portico [13] at the entrance of the
gateway toward the north were two
tables, and on the other side of the
portico of the gateway were two tables.
41 Four tables on one side and four tables
on the other, at the side of the gate,
eight tables on which they did the slay-

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each facing inward on this court, which was 175 feet in depth. The pavement is not described, but the word used implies it was cut in, or fitted together. It may have been mosaic or tile.

40: 28-31. The Inner Court Described. This again had three gateways, east, north, and south, each one identical with and directly opposite to those in the outer court, and 175 feet therefrom. This court also was on an elevated platform, reached by 8 steps.

40: 32-37. The Gates of the Inner Court Are Described, and are identical with those in the outer court. At the north gate, however, were arrangements providing for the slaughter of the burnt-offering (cf. Lev. 1: 11; 4: 24, 29, 33; 6: 25; 7: 2, 14).

40: 38-43. Special Chambers and Tables for Offerings Described. References are made to the burnt-offering, the sin-offering and the guilt-offering only in passing. The burnt-offering is very ancient and was a part of the Hebrew ritual from very early days (Gen. 22: 2, 13; Exod. 24: 5; Gen. 8: 20). But with the sin-offering and the guilt-offering the case seems to be different. There is no indication that either was considered legitimate in the pre-exilic period (cf. the sin-offering in 1 Sam. 6: 3, 4, 8, 17, and the guilt-offering 2 Kings 12: 17). But in Ezekiel and then in the later days both were given much prominence. For the guilt-offering, note Ezek. 40: 39; 42: 13; 44: 29; 46: 20; Lev., chaps. 4, 7, 14, and Numb., chap. 5. For

42 ing. There were four tables for the
burnt-offering; hewn stone two feet seven
and a half inches long, and two feet
seven and a half inches broad, and their
height was one foot nine inches. And
they laid on them the instruments with
which they slew the burnt-offering, and
43 the sacrifice. And ledges, a handbreadth,
were fastened on the inside
round about, and on [9] the tables was
the flesh of the offering.
44 Then outside of the inner gate were
two [14] chambers in the inner court,
one beside the north gate, and it [14a]
faced southward, while one beside the
45 south [14b] gate faced northward. And
he said to me, This chamber, that faces
southward is for the priests, the keepers
of the charge of the temple buildings.
46 And the chamber that faces north is
for the priests, the keepers of the charge
of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok,
who from the sons of Levi approach
Yahweh to minister to him.
47 Then he measured the court, eighty-seven
feet six inches long and eighty-seven
feet six inches broad, four square,
the altar being in front of the
temple.
48 Then he brought me to the portico of
the temple, and he measured the post
of the portico,[15] one each side, eight
feet nine inches; and the breadth of the
entrance was five feet three inches, on
49 each side. The length of the portico
was thirty-five feet and its breadth nineteen
feet two and a half inches; and
with ten [16] steps they went up to it;
and pillars were by the posts, one on
either side.

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the sin-offering, note Ezek. 40: 39; 43: 19, 20; 45: 17-19; 44: 2; Lev. 7: 37, and Numb., chap. 7. From this it appears that this writer made a real contribution to the development of Jewish ritual.

40: 44-46. SPECIAL CHAMBERS FOR THE PRIESTS. The Hebrew in vs. 44 gives a chamber to the *singers*, which, no doubt, they had in the later days. But the Septuagint that reads *two* chambers, is correct as these two chambers are definitely assigned to the priests in vss. 45, 46.

The line drawn between the sons of Zadok and the Levites is here expressed for the first time in O. T. literature. The sons of Zadok—Zadokites—gained preference because of their history. Abiathar had been prominent in priestly circles in Jerusalem until the close of the reign of David. At that time he anointed Adonijah as king, but the younger son Solomon proved to have the stronger court backing. He was anointed by Zadok, and shortly after Abiathar was exiled to Anathoth (1 Kings 1: 7, 8, 34). Henceforth Zadok led the Jerusalem priesthood. He gained prestige when the temple was built, and with the Deuteronomic reform, when Jerusalem became the only legitimate sanctuary (Deut. 12: 11-13), he and his guild were supreme in the priesthood. But now in literature for the first time we find the distinction between priest and Levite, the former belonging to Zadok and the latter were those whose ancestors had belonged to other sanctuaries.

The altar (47) is described more completely in 43: 13-17.

40: 48–41: 26. DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE and the immediately connected buildings. The text is much confused, and the architectural terms are so indefinite and obscure that occasionally the translation is most uncertain. General features of the picture are, however, reasonably clear.

Chapter 41

40: 48–41: 1-4. THE GENERAL DIMENSIONS OF THE TEMPLE. Ten steps (49) led up to the portico of the temple, that is, the temple and its immediate area was on an elevation equivalent to these ten steps above the inner court. The portico was 35 feet long and 19¼ feet broad. Like the entrance to the temple of Solomon, there was a pillar on either side, but unlike those, which were free, these were part of the walls at the side of the entrance.

Between the portico and the temple proper, there were two more posts, one on either side, each side of which was 10½ feet. While these are called posts (41: 1), partitions might be the better name. Passing between these, 8¾ feet

41:1 Then he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, ten feet six inches broad on the one side and ten feet six inches broad on the other, (the
2 breadth of the tent).[1] And the breadth of the entrance was seventeen feet six inches, and the sides of the entrance were eight feet nine inches, on each side; and he measured its length seventy feet, and its breadth thirty-five
3 feet. Then he went inside and measured each post of the entrance, three feet six inches. The entrance measured ten feet six inches, and the breadth of the entrance was twelve feet three inches.
4 And he measured its length, thirty-five feet, and its breadth thirty-five feet in front of the shrine; then he said to me this is the holy of holies.

5 Then he measured the wall of the temple, ten feet six inches, and the breadth of each side chamber round
6 about the temple was seven feet. Now these side chambers, there were thirty, three stories,[2] chamber upon [3] chamber, they were let into a wall of the building provided round about for the cells, but they were not mortised into
7 the temple wall; and there was a margin that ran round about from story to story to the side chambers, as a winding stairway from one story to another around the construction; and the breadth of this building increased toward the top, so the lowest one had access to
8 the topmost through the middle. Also I saw that round about the building there was a projecting platform, the foundation of the side chambers, full
9 ten feet six inches. And the thickness of the outside wall of the side chambers
10 was eight feet nine inches. And there was an open space between [4] the side chambers, thirty-five feet in width all
11 around the temple. And the entrance to the side chambers from the open space; one entrance was toward the north, and the other toward the south; and the width of the open space round about (place) [5] was eight feet nine inches.
12 Now the rear building that faced the separate space was one hundred and twenty-two feet six inches; and a wall was round about the rear building eight feet nine inches thick, and its length was one hundred and fifty-seven feet six inches.

13 Then he measured the temple; its length was one hundred and seventy
14 feet: and the separate space and its building and walls, was one hundred
15a and seventy-five feet broad; then he measured the length of the rear building facing the separate space, and its galleries on both sides, one hundred and seventy feet.

15b And the inner sanctuary and the por-
16 tico of the court were roofed over;[6] and the latticed windows, and the galleries, three stories, round about facing the threshold had a wooden case-

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wide, one enters the 1st division of the temple, the holy place (41:2-4). This measured 70 by 35 feet, and was separated from the most holy place by posts, or partitions that were 3½ feet thick.

Apparently the divine guide alone entered the inner sanctuary, as *he went inside* (3), and then gave the report of the measurements, with the telling information, *this is the holy of holies* (4). Its sanctity was such that none but those of high rank in the priesthood might enter. In later days only the high priest could enter, and he only on the day of the atonement (Lev. 16:2-34; 21:10-15). This passage is probably intermediary, as no restrictions are stated. This inner sanctuary was 35 feet square.

41:5-11. A DESCRIPTION OF THE SIDE-CHAMBERS. These ran around two sides and the west end of the main building of the temple. They numbered 30, on each of 3 stories, and were against the outside of the temple wall, not tied into it, but secured by a structure of their own. Each one was 7 feet broad, the depth varying from one story to another. An inside corridor ran in front of each story, and a circular stairway seems to have led from one story to another. The entrance was gained from the outside by two doors, one on the north and the other on the south, which opened out on the separated space, or pathway, 8¾ feet in width. These side-chambers, as well as the whole of the temple structure, rested on an elevated foundation of some 10½ feet in depth (8, cf. 40:49).

ment [7] round about. From the ground
up to the windows, the windows being
17 covered, up above the entrance, even up
on the inside and on the outside, all
18 round the wall, inside and outside were
carved [8] cherubim and palm trees, alternately
a palm tree and a cherub.
19 And each cherub had two faces, a man's
face toward the palm tree on one side,
and a lion's face toward the palm tree
on the other side. These were carved
20 all round the temple building, from the
floor up to the roof,[9] were cherubim
and palm trees. (The wall of the sanctuary).[10]
21 Now as for the sanctuary, the doorposts
were squared; and facing the
holy place was an appearance like the
22 appearance of an altar of wood, five feet
three inches high, its length three feet
six inches; and its corners, and its
length, and its sides were of wood.
Then he said to me, This is the table
that is before Yahweh.
23, 24 And the doors were double-fold;
each one had two folding leaves, one
25 pair for each door. And on the doors of
the sanctuary were carved cherubim and
palm trees, even as they were carved on
the walls.
And thick wooden beams were in
26 front of the portico on the outside, and
cherubim [11] and palm trees were on
this side and on that, on [3] the side
of the portico, and on the side chambers
of the temple, and on the beams.

42:1 Then he brought me out to the inner
court [1] on the north, and brought me
to the chambers [2] that faced the separate
space and the [3] building on the
2 north. (to the front of) [3a] The
length was one hundred and seventy-five
feet (gate of the north) [4] and the
breadth eighty-seven and a half feet,
3 (in front of twenty) [3a] which belonged
to the inner court and in front of the
pavement of the outer court, gallery
rose on gallery, to the third story.
4 In front of the chambers there was a
walk seventeen and a half feet wide and
one hundred and seventy-five [5] feet
long; their doors opened to the north.
5 Now the chambers in the upper story
were narrower than those in the middle
and the lowest in the building, for the
6 galleries reduced them; for they were
built in three stories, having no supporting
columns like the columns of the
outer court, therefore it was narrower
than either the middle, or the ground
7 floor. Now the wall which was outside,
as the boundary of the chambers, along
the outer court in front of the chambers,
was eighty-seven and a half feet long.
8 For the length of the chambers in the
outside court was eighty-seven and a
half feet; but those facing the temple
were one hundred and seventy-five feet.
9 Now, underneath these chambers,
there was an entrance from the east, as
one goes thither from the outer court,
10 at the beginning of the outer wall [6]

41:12-15a. GENERAL MEASUREMENTS. A building in the rear of the temple occupied 122 by 157 feet, and was surrounded by a wall 8¾ feet thick, but no indication is given of its purpose (12). Then 3 squares, the 1st directly in front of the temple, the 2d, the temple and the separated space on either side, and the 3d, the building and its area at the rear, are each reported to be 170 feet on each side.

41:15b-26. DESCRIPTION OF THE INSIDE OF THE TEMPLE AND ITS ORNAMENTATION. Some of the architectural features cannot be reconstructed, but the scheme of decoration is evident. Much of the interior was finished in wood. This marked its beauty. Cherubim with two heads, one that of a man, the other that of a lion, alternated with palm trees in every place they could be used. It is noticeable that these cherubim differ from those of the chariot-vision in chapter one, having two heads instead of four. Also the decoration has part of the scheme that was found in the temple of Solomon.

Chapter 42

42:1-20. DESCRIPTION OF OTHER BUILDINGS. This but continues the earlier chapters, adding to the story some new structures, explaining their uses, and then giving a summary of the whole.

42:1-12. PRIESTS' CHAMBERS IN THE INNER COURT. The structures described here are found nowhere else, and this, together with the exceedingly bad text, makes some of the translation mere guesswork. What is certain is that there was

on the south side,[7] facing the separate
space, and the buildings were chambers,
11 with a walk in front of them, similar
to the chambers on the north, of the
same length and breadth; and all of
their exits had similar arrangements and
12 appointments; but the doors of these
chambers were toward the south, a door
at the beginning of the walk in front of
the outer wall, coming from the east.
13 Then he said to me, The north and [8]
the south chambers, which face the
separate space, these are holy chambers,
where the priests, who approach Yahweh, eat the most holy things; there
they place the most holy things, the
meal, and the sin, and the guilt-offer-
14 ings; for the place is holy. When once
the priests enter, they shall not go out
from the holy place to the outer court,
without leaving their robes in which
they ministered there, for these are holy.
They shall put on other garments when
they approach that which is public.

15 When he had completed the measurements of the inner house, he then
brought me out by way of the gate
facing east; and he measured it all
16 around. He measured eastward, (by the
measuring rod)[9] by the measuring
rod (rods),[10] eight hundred and
17 seventy-five feet. Then he turned
toward [11] the north, eight hundred
and seventy-five feet (rods)[10] by the
18 measuring rod. Then he turned [11]
southward and measured eight hundred
and seventy-five feet (rods)[10] by the
19 measuring rod. Then he turned [11]
westward and measured eight hundred
and seventy-five feet, by the measuring
20 rod. In the four directions he measured
it, the wall belonging to it round about,
the length was eight hundred and
seventy-five feet, and the breadth was
eight hundred and seventy-five feet, to
separate between the holy and the
profane.

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need for more adequate provision for the priesthood than earlier regulations had supplied. This indicates a time of growing ritual, and a more numerous priesthood. Possibly part of the textual difficulty arises from the fact that as the sons of Zadok gained prestige and added to their requirements, the scribe had to add to the text.

42:13-14. THESE CHAMBERS ARE HOLY. It was in these offices that the priests received, divided and kept part of their living. Those parts of the offerings that were their dues (cf. Numb. 18:9), as the meal-offering (cf. Lev. 2:3, 10; 7:9, 10; 10:12), the sin-offering (Lev. 6:25; 7:7), and the guilt-offering (Lev. 7:7), were to be brought, placed on the tables (40:39), and possibly divided and stored. It is noticeable that the regulations here are in no way complete. The heave-offering (Lev. 10:15; Numb. 18:8), and other dues, as well as the tithes, are not provided for in this legislation. Dressing-rooms and adequate accommodation for storing garments were required (14, cf. 44:17-19).

42:15-20. MEASUREMENTS FOR THE SACRED AREA, gives a summary. Already detailed measurements have been made of the temple (40:48–41:40), of the inner court (40:28–43:4), and of the outer court (40:6-27). All these constitute the sacred area and were enclosed within a wall that was 500 cubits, or 875 feet on each side (cf. 45:2). This was the holy place, and, surrounded by stanch walls and well-guarded gates, was securely separated from the profane.

Chapter 43

43:1-12. YAHWEH'S ENTRY INTO THE TEMPLE. The measurements of the sacred area and some of the buildings therein were concluded in 42:20, and this is taken as an introduction to Yahweh's appearance. This arrangement is very fitting, but the editor failed to note that the writer was, if the narrative is in order, already at the east gate (42:15). Hence 43:1, reading, he brought me to the gate toward the east, is evidence of editorial work not of a very high order. In reality this chapter has no connection with what precedes, the angel-guide is all but forgotten (6), the voice taking his place; while vss. 13-27 form a separate unit (cf. Introd. L).

43:1 And he brought me to the gate
(the gate)[1] that faced the east, and
2 lo! the glory of the God of Israel
came from the direction of the east;
his voice was like the sound of many
waters, and the earth shone with his
3 glory, (And like the appearance was the
appearance I saw)[2] like the appearance
I saw when Yahweh[3] came to
destroy the city. And the appearance
was like the appearance that I saw
by[4] the canal Chebar, and I fell
4 on[4] my face, and the glory of Yahweh
entered the house by the gate that
5 faced the east. Then the spirit lifted
me up and brought me into the inner
court, and lo! the glory of Yahweh
6 filled the temple. And I heard one
speaking to me from the temple, now
7 the man was standing beside me, and
he said to me, Mortal man, this place is
my throne, indeed this place is for the
soles of my feet, where I shall dwell in
the midst of the children of Israel forever,
and never again shall the house of
Israel defile my holy name; they, nor
their kings through their harlotries, and
with the dead bodies of their kings;
8 through placing their threshold against
my threshold, and their doorpost beside
my doorpost, only the wall being
between me and them; thus they defiled
my holy name by the abominations
that they did, so that my anger
9 consumed them. Now let them put
their harlotry, and the dead bodies
of their kings far away from me, then I
shall dwell in their midst forever.
10 Mortal man, you show to the house of
Israel this house, its appearance and its
pattern,[6] (that they may be ashamed of
11 all their iniquities)[5] that they may

The importance of the east gate in religious thinking and ritual has already been noted (40:6). By this approach the writer entered, and here he completed his tour (42:15, cf. 44:1).

43:2-5. THE GLORY OF YAHWEH ENTERS THE SANCTUARY. The phrases of these vss. are all found in the earlier part of the book, usually segregated in the superscriptions. The *glory of Yahweh*, or as here, the glory of the God of Israel (11:22; 8:4; cf. 1:28; 3:12, 23; 10:4, 18, 19; 11:23); a *voice like the sound of many waters* (1:24); *the spirit lifted me up* (cf. 2:2; 3:14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 24); *I fell on my face* (1:28; 3:23); *the appearance* (8:4; 11:24), and the *canal Chebar* (1:1; 3:23; 10:15; 20:22), all these phrases are common to the Babylonian editor (cf. Introd. xxvi-xxviii).

The glory of Yahweh filled the temple (5) is reminiscent of 10:3, and historically is connected with such passages as 1 Kings 8:10, 11, which is repeated in 2 Chron. 5:13, 14, of which 2 Chron. 7:1-3 is an enlargement, revealing priestly tendencies, which are still further evident in Exod. 40:35-38. All this was an effort, in picturesque form, to assure the people of the abiding presence of Yahweh in their history.

43:6-12. REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE TEMPLE, are given by the one speaking, that is by Yahweh (6). The man, or the angel-guide has become a supernumerary, the scribe inserting an apologetic phrase (6), and the *Voice* gives instructions. The problem of explaining inspiration was always a serious one. Prophets such as Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-4) and even more so Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4-10) professed to have immediate relation with God himself. In later periods, however, men less daring, or more reverent, interposed intermediaries between God and man. In the late Jewish period the Voice or the daughter of the Voice was a favorite explanation.

The first declaration is that the temple is the special abode of Yahweh. It is his throne, and from there he rules and leads his people (7). It is also his footstool, the place for the soles of his feet, and he is above and superior to the temple and the earth (cf. Ps. 99:5; Isa. 60:13; 1 Chron. 28:2).

In these regulations there are two features. The 1st are the negative demands. There must be no more idolatry, for that defiles the house and the holy name of Yahweh. Under the terms adultery and harlotry the writer is thinking of false worship. If Yahweh is a husband, then be ashamed [7] of all that they have done; the form of the house and its pattern, with its exits and entrances, and all its plans, together with all its ordinances and regulations, and all its plans make known to them, and write them in their sight, so that they may preserve all its plans, and all its regulations and do them. 12 This is the law of the house; all the territory on the top of the mountain, all around, shall be most holy. Lo! this is the law of the house.

13 And these are the measurements of the altar in cubits; the cubit is a cubit and a hand breadth. And the height [8] of the base shall be one foot nine inches,[9] and one foot nine inches broad, with a border [10] around [4] the edge, one span. This shall be the 14 height [11] of the altar: from the top [12] of the base to the lower ledge shall be three feet six inches, and its breadth shall be one foot nine inches; and from the smaller ledge to the larger one shall be seven feet, and one foot nine 15 inches broad. And the altar-hearth [13] shall be seven feet, and above the altar-hearth shall be horns, each one, one foot 16 nine inches long;[14] and the altar-hearth shall be four-square twenty-one 17 feet long by twenty-one feet broad. And the ledge around it shall be twenty-four and a half feet, square on [4] all its sides. And the border round it shall be ten and a half inches, and its base shall be twenty-one inches wide. And the steps shall face the east.

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any lack of loyalty to him on the part of his people was equivalent to the violation of marital vows. But also, in the common fertility worship there was ofttimes, in the name of religion, the actual immorality.

Another negative requirement was that the house should not be defiled by the dead bodies of their kings. Possibly the royal cemetery had been too near the temple. Early kings had been buried in the city of David (1 Kings 2: 10; 11: 43), but later, for some reason, a change was made and Manasseh was buried in his own house in the garden of Uzza, while Amon, his son, was buried in the same garden, and in his own sepulchre (2 Kings 21: 18, 26). The taboo against touching a dead body is found only in the later legislation (Numb. 19: 11-20; Lev. 21: 1-4).

Also the proximity of secular buildings to the residence of Yahweh is prohibited (8), a direct reversal of conditions from those of Solomon's temple. That was a *royal* sanctuary, the private property of the king, in the same enclosure as the royal palaces (cf. 1 Kings 6: 1-10; 7: 2-12). The complete separation that is here demanded marks progress toward the priestly ideal. The king and the kingdom as such have passed, and the officials of organized religion are now most influential. As they believed secular relations had been the cause of the national downfall, the eradication of such was essential to well-being.

But there is a positive side to these regulations. You must show, or *make known this house*, to the house of Israel (10). An educational program with a strong emphasis on all parts of the cultus is the thing needed. This is the essential note of chapters 40-48 (Note 40: 4; 44: 5). It reminds one of Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, and prepares the way for a legalistic attitude toward life.

To be ashamed of all that they have done (11) would be very effective for those with tender consciences, but less refined punishment has sometimes seemed necessary. This is the same note as found in earlier passages (cf. 16: 52, 54, 61, 63; 20: 41, 43).

Vs. 12 is doubly emphatic, this is the law of the house.

43: 13-27. THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING. The two themes, the measurements of the altar, and its dedication are unrelated to what precedes. Peculiar features, as well as the lack of connection, hint at a different origin. Even at that, it is strange that at least 13-17 does not follow 40: 47 (cf. Introd. L).

43: 13-17. THE MEASUREMENTS OF THE ALTAR. While not all of the details are

18 And he said to me, Mortal man, thus
says (Lord) Yahweh, These are the
regulations of the altar, on the day when
it is erected in order to offer thereon
burnt-offerings, and to sprinkle blood
19 thereon. Then you shall give a young
bullock as a sin-offering, to the Levitical
priests, those who are of the family of
Zadok, who may come near me, Oracle
20 of Yahweh, to minister to me; and
you shall take some of its blood and
put it on the four horns of the altar [15]
and on [4] the four corners of the ledge
and on [4] the rim round about, so
21 shall you cleanse it and purify it. Then
you shall take the bullock for the sin-offering
and burn it in the appointed
place in the area outside the sanctuary.
22 Then on the second day, you shall
offer an unblemished he-goat as a sin-offering,
and they shall cleanse the altar
as they cleansed it by means of the
23 bullock. When you have completed the
purification, you shall offer an unblem-

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furnished, it was a substantial structure, 31½ feet square at the bottom, rising in 4 stages, each narrower than the one supporting it, to the top which was 21 feet square, and stood 21 feet above the ground level. The altar-hearth, that is the top, was reached from the east side by steps. The supposition is that this great altar stood in the inner court, in front of the temple and the eastern gate (40: 47), immediately in the center of the square.

It is apparent that it differed greatly from the earliest place of sacrifice. In the Mosaic and pre-Mosaic times, when religion was dominated by the nomadic and semiagricultural practices, then the only legitimate altar was one of earth or of unhewn stone (cf. Exod. 20: 24). A tool must not be lifted up on it, as that would profane it, and no steps up to it were permitted (Exod. 20: 25, 26). But those days were in the far past, and the influences of a growing civilization have penetrated things the most sacred. When Solomon lived in a ceiled house, he felt that Yahweh should not be sheltered in the primitive tent. When Ahaz became an ally of the Assyrian king, he deemed it essential that a new type of altar should be placed in the temple (2 Kings 16: 10-16). What these changes were, or how many came in later we are not informed in detail, but that Ezekiel's altar-plan was built on national experience may be assumed as certain. It has often been thought that this design has been strongly influenced by the well-known Babylonian Ziggurat, usually seven-storied, with the special abode for deity on the top. Be that as it may, this altar was imposing and conspicuous, and indicates that the altar, like the temple, should stand in the very center of the life of the people.

The altar-hearth (15, 16), an unusual word, is found again in Isa. 29: 1, 2, 7, and strange to say, in the Moabite stone, lines 12 and 19, an evidence of the close relation in things religious among the various Semitic tribes.

43: 18-27. THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES FOR THE ALTAR. This is a fragment that suggests the extreme importance the priests attached to such ritual. The altar must be cleansed by 7 days' carefully ordered rites before it was ready for use for the people.

Similar ceremonies had been observed in the initiatory rites in connection with Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8: 62-64), and the dedication of the tabernacle was reported to have been equally elaborate (Exod. 29: 36, 37), while the consecration of a priest to the sacred office was still more serious (Exod. 29: 1-35). No doubt all such services, carried through with great solemnity, were very impressive.

The cleansing was accomplished by the following rites: sprinkling the blood (18, 19, cf. 44: 15; Lev. 1: 5; 3: 8; 8: 11). The giving of life, or the use of blood, as an appeasement to the gods, is an almost world-wide practice. Whether its origin, which lies far back in antiquity, was due to the idea of a gift, or a common meal, or community of life, in later periods it

ished bullock and an unblemished ram
24 from the flock. And when you offer
them before Yahweh, the priests shall
sprinkle salt on them, and they shall
offer them up a burnt-offering to
25 Yahweh. For seven days you shall provide
daily a he-goat as a sin-offering, also an
unblemished bullock and an unblemished
26 ram of the flock. For seven days they
shall purify the altar, and cleanse it, and
27 consecrate it. Then when these seven
days are completed, from the eighth day
onward, the priests shall offer on the
altar your burnt-offerings and your
peace-offerings. Then I will accept you.
Oracle of (Lord) Yahweh.

44:1 Then he brought me back to the
outer gate of the sanctuary, facing east,
2 and it was shut. And Yahweh said to
me, This gate stays shut; it shall not
be opened, nor shall any man go in

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was performed because deity commanded it. The fiat of the Almighty is the final authority of the priest.

The sin-offering in the *appropriate* place (21), which is nowhere indicated, has an important function in *de sinning* the altar (cf. 44: 26; Exod. 29: 14; Lev. 4: 11).

The Zadokites are the privileged servants in all the priestly functions (cf. 40: 44-47; 44: 15-27). If special chambers were provided for them, special tasks were also required of them.

The peace-offerings (27), or better the thank-offerings, are not mentioned in the earlier chapters of this division (cf. 40: 39); nor is any description of it given here. The meaning and use of this offering varied greatly, and probably represented the growth and union of different ideas and ritual. This was one of the rites in the dedication of the priest, so vividly described in Exod. 29: 19-28.

These purification ceremonies were to continue for seven days, a number of great significance to the priest, and thereafter the altar would be fit for use for the people. What is stated and implied in this dedication service is conclusive proof that the voice of the prophet has been stilled by the all-embracing daily routine of the hierarchy.

Chapter 44

44: 1–46: 24. REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE TEMPLE. 44: 1-31, regulations concerning officials; and 45: 1-17, their revenues and lands; 45: 18–46: 24, regulations concerning the offerings, are the general divisions of this section.

44: 1-31. THE OFFICERS OF THE TEMPLE. The minor divisions are: 1-3, the east gate is shut; 4-6, the commission of the prophet; 7-9, foreigners may not serve in the temple; 10-14, Levites are made subordinates; 15-31, Zadokites, their honor; 17-19, their dress; 20-22, habits; 23-27, duties; and 28-31, dues.

44: 1-3. THE EAST GATE IS CLOSED. This introduction assumes knowledge of Yahweh's return through the east gate (43: 1-4), and fits in admirably after 43: 4. According to the itinerary, the prophet is brought from the inner court (43: 5), to the outer gate, where he had been stationed in 42: 15. This zig-zagging progress of the observer is a literary device, rather than actual movement of his person either in vision or on tour.

This, the outer gate guarding the eastern entrance to the outer gate, was permanently closed, in contrast to the gate of the inner court (cf. 46: 1). Yahweh's entrance had made it sacred or taboo, and danger beset anyone who might consciously or unconsciously walk in the same way. This is a climax to the idea that the gods were far removed from man, and any contact with them, save by those who had been made immune, might have fatal consequences. Yahweh made his appearance in the sacred mountain, but the people must be prevented from any contact therewith (Exod. 34: 3). The ark of the covenant was the dwelling-place of deity, but none unfamiliar with its customs dared touch it with impunity. The same principle underlies much of chapters 40–48. Yahweh passes through

**through it, for Yahweh, God of Israel
went in through it; therefore it is shut.
3 The prince, however,[1] he may sit there
to eat bread before Yahweh. By way of
the portico of the gate he may come,
and he shall go out the same way.
4 Then he brought me by way of the
north gate to [2] the front of the house,
and I looked, and lo! the glory of Yahweh
filled the house of Yahweh, and I
5 fell on [2] my face, and Yahweh said
to me, Mortal man, take heed, look
carefully and listen attentively to all
that I say to you, concerning all the
rules of the house of Yahweh, and all
its regulations, and give heed to the entrances
of the house, with all the exits
6 of the sanctuary; and say to the rebellious[3]
house of Israel, Thus says the
Lord Yahweh, Your abominations, O
7 house of Israel, have been too many; in
your bringing foreigners, uncircumcised
of heart and flesh, into my sanctuary to
profane it (my house);[4] in your offering
the fat and the blood, my food, thus
you have broken [5] my covenant by**

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the eastern gate, and none may venture that way again. Yahweh entered the Holy of Holies and none may enter there, save those with accredited lineage, trained, cleansed, and clothed in the approved fashion. It is interesting to note that from Babylonia there comes a very close parallel to this, in the "Sacred Door," in some of their sanctuaries, through which only deity might pass (A. Pohl, *Biblica*, 1931, 90-92).

THE PRINCE, a term frequently used by Ezekiel for Zedekiah (cf. 7:27; 12:10, 12; 21:25), is found eighteen times in these chapters. It is used apparently for the civil ruler of the future community. But its origin and significance are not quite clear. With the collapse of the kingdom, and the introduction of paltry, provincial governors, who had little power, the king became but a name in history. Not only so, but because of his past political interests and alliances, in many quarters the name was in bad odor, and often the blame for the national disaster was laid at his door. But to wipe out an office that was four hundred years old, and had had some illustrious incumbents was well-nigh unthinkable. To dream of having unlimited privileges and powers restored to such an one, was equally impossible. Such was the dilemma, that is at least partly solved by dropping the old name, *king*, adopting another that was honorable, *prince*, and assigning him functions that were wholly religious. Eating the sacred meal in the sacred gateway is one of his privileges, others are recorded later, but even he cannot pass through this entrance.

44:4-31. REGULATIONS CONCERNING TEMPLE OFFICIALS. These are treated in an orderly fashion with some seven divisions.

44:4-6. THE PROPHET MUST OBSERVE AND TEACH. Stationed in the north gate, probably for the better observation, he sees the glory of Yahweh filling the place. This is a common method used to convey the idea of the transcendence of God (cf. Exod. 33:17-23; Ezek. 43:4-6). But the point of this is not the spectacle, it is the command, to listen and then to instruct. The prophet is to become a teacher, or a priest. The instruction, as in 40:4 and 43:11, 12, must be the regulations regarding the entrances and the exits of the house. This is preparatory to the specific rules touching the priesthood, its limitations, its divisions, and general requirements. Teaching became prominent in the reform of King Josiah (Deut. 6:4-9), was emphasized in the Servant Songs (cf. Isa. 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9), and from the time of Ezra on was a characteristic of Judaism.

44:7-10. FOREIGNERS MAY NOT SERVE IN THE HOUSE. Apparently some aliens had gained official positions of importance. This was natural, almost inevitable. Outside influences aided as much, or more than inside ones in the development of the Hebrew ritual. If Phœnician architects built the temple of Solomon, who laid out the pattern of the new ritual? Those who were the teachers of

8 means of [6] all your abominations, and
you have not kept the charge of my
holy things, but you have given them [7]
charge of ministry [8] in my sanctuary.
9 Therefore[9] thus says the Lord Yahweh,
No foreigner, uncircumcised of
heart and flesh shall enter my sanctuary,
not one of the foreigners in the midst
of the children of Israel.

10 As for the Levites who went far from
me when Israel went astray, for they
went astray from me following after
their filthy images, they also shall bear
11 the consequences of their guilt, and
heart and flesh shall enter my sanctuary,
acting as overseers in [2] the gates of
the house. They shall slaughter the
burnt-offerings and the sacrifices for the
people, and stand before them to minister
12 for them, because they ministered
for them before filthy images, and were
to the house of Israel a cause of stumbling
in guilt; therefore I have pledged
myself against them, Oracle of the Lord
Yahweh, that they shall bear the consequences
13 of their iniquity. Hence they
shall not approach me to act as my
priest, nor shall they touch any of my
holy things, the most holy things. So
shall they bear their shame and their
abominations that they have practised.
14 However, I give them charge of the
house to perform all the service that is
to be done therein.

15 But the priests, the Levites, the sons
of Zadok, who kept charge of my sanc-

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their ritual easily gained positions of influence. We remember that Moses was instructed by his Kenite father-in-law in civic affairs (Exod. 18:13-23), who is also reported to have offered sacrifices to Yahweh (Exod. 18:12). Carites, kin of the Philistines, were temple guards in the time of Athaliah (2 Kings 11:4-8), and in the time of Nehemiah foreigners were almost in control (Neh. 13:4). This permission of aliens to function in the temple is here spoken of as covenant-breaking, but no pre-exilic law can be cited to support this charge. But such attitudes are all but universal, and are found early as well as late in the history of a people. It is a central idea in Deuteronomy, with a savage denunciation of those who introduce false worship (Deut. 18:9-18; 13:13-18). It is in line with the intolerant, exclusive legislation of the Ezra movement (Neh. 7:64, 65; 13:4, 28, 29). Indeed, we rarely welcome foreigners within our private preserves, and we think their presence is repugnant to Deity. A commentary on this was the tablet from Herod's temple found in 1870 by Clermont-Ganneau, the substance of which is, no stranger shall enter within the balustrade around the temple and the enclosure; and whosoever is caught shall be responsible for his own death.

44:11-14. LEVITES BECOME SUBORDINATE OFFICIALS. These were the priests, who in the earlier days had served at the shrines outside of Jerusalem, where there was less dignity of worship, and probably more primitive forms had been preserved, while less approved ones had filtered in from the outside world. The Deuteronomic reform provided that they could take service in the temple in Jerusalem (Deut. 26:11, 12), but for some reason this never became an accomplished fact (2 Kings 23:9). Their guilt then was that they had not observed the proper ritual, that of Jerusalem, or they had not performed it properly. For this, which might be classed among the unwitting sins, they must pay the penalty; and this, a penalty on ignorance, is the judgment of all nature as well as that of the priest.

Their duties, which are here only outlined, are: to act as guards at the entrances of the courts; to perform the menial labor in connection with the sacrifices; and to minister for the people; but even more humiliating than all this, was the prohibition that they must never have anything to do with the holy things. Further duties are mentioned in chapter 48.

44:15-31. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ZADOKITES. We have met the sons of Zadok earlier (40:46; 43:19) and they are again found in chapter 48:10, 11.

tuary when the children of Israel went
astray from me, they shall approach me
to minister to me, and shall stand before
me to offer me fat and blood. Or-
16 acle of the Lord Yahweh. They shall
enter my sanctuary and shall approach
my table to minister to me, and they
shall keep my charge.
17 Whenever they enter the gate of the
inner court, they shall wear linen garments,
while they are ministering within
the gates of the inner court, or in the
house, they shall have no wool on them.
18 They shall have linen turbans on their
heads, and linen breeches on their loins,
and they shall not girdle themselves
19 with anything causing sweat. Then
when they go out into the outer court
(into the outer court) [11] to the people,
they shall put off the garments in which
they have been ministering, and shall
place them in the sacred chambers, and
put on other garments, that they may
not infect the people by their garments.
20 Neither shall they shave their heads,
nor let their hair grow long; they must
21 cut the hair of their heads. No priest
shall drink any wine, when he enters
22 the inner court, nor shall they marry a
widow, nor a divorcee, but only a virgin
of the lineage of the house of Israel.
But a widow (the widow) [12] of a
priest they may marry.

44: 15, 16. THE ZADOKITES ARE PRIVILEGED BECAUSE THEY KEPT THE CHARGE OF MY SANCTUARY. This, then, is the reward of long service and faithfulness. For four hundred years their ancestors had enjoyed the privileges and directed the worship of the chief temple in the land, and now their sons shaped the policy that underlies these chapters. Many of them had been industrious, hard-working, progressive and God-fearing men. There had been many struggles. High church and low, the broad and the narrow, had been in almost constant conflict. International forces had played about them, and the native religious spirit, reinforced from the desert, had been a constant leaven. The priest had drawn up his ritual codes and the prophet had vigorously assailed them. Thus, as in the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15: 25-28), the spirit led them, and these chapters are one of the landmarks of their religious history, in which the Zadokites receive their reward.

To enter my sanctuary and to approach my table, which phrases are intended to be inclusive, is honor enough for any religiously minded group. For two reasons there is little detail of the service given here. One is, that principles are here emphasized, the details of which were well known to the readers. But the other fact is this, that the ritual was only in the process of development. Here, there are only two classes in the priesthood, later it was organized into twenty-four (1 Chron. 23: 1–26: 32). Here, there is no mention of the tithe for the priests, which makes one wonder if it played an important part at this time. It is also noticeable that no high priest is mentioned in the whole scheme. This can be understood only in the light of development. Priestly leadership has not yet crystallized into the high priesthood. We are at the beginning of a priestly hierarchy, not at the end.

44: 17-22. THE DRESS AND HABITS OF THE ZADOKITES. Linen alone can be worn when on official duties. Probably one of the earliest priestly garments was the skin of the sacrificed animal (Gen. 3: 21). Linen was used almost exclusively by the Egyptian priests, and this may have had some influence on Israel. Requirements like this, somewhat similar to clerical garb, often have a long and significant history. These garments were sacred, hence they might be dangerous to the general public, whom they might infect with some of the divine power that pervaded them (cf. 46: 20; Exod. 29: 37; 30: 29; Lev. 6: 27). Thus the precaution to store them in sacred chambers, that were inaccessible to the layman was the result of experience (42: 13, 14; cf. 1 Sam. 5: 10, 11; 6: 19–7: 1).

Shaving the head (20) was prohibited, as it disfigured the individual, and was

23 They shall teach my people the difference between holy and profane, and they
shall train them to distinguish between
24 the clean and the unclean. Also in
cases of dispute they shall act as
judges, and shall give decisions according to my judgments. They shall
carefully preserve my rules and my
regulations at all my sacred seasons, and
they shall keep sacred my sabbaths.
25 They shall have no contact with a dead
body, thereby defiling themselves, save
in the case of father or mother, or son
or daughter, or brother, or a sister who
has no husband, then they may defile
26 themselves. But after one's cleansing
27 they must count seven days. And when
he enters the inner court (holy
place) [14] to minister in the sanctuary,
he shall present his sin-offering. Oracle of the Lord Yahweh.
28 Also to them there shall be no [15]
inheritance. I am that inheritance. Indeed, no property in Israel shall be given
29 them; I am their property. The meal-offerings, and the sin-offerings, and the
guilt-offerings, these shall they eat; and
all that is devoted to Yahweh in Israel
30 shall be theirs. The choice of all the
first-fruits of everything, and all the portions of everything of all kinds of your
thank-offerings shall belong to the
priest; and the choice of your coarse
meal you shall give the priest, so that
a blessing may rest on your houses.[16]
31 But no carcass, and nothing torn of
bird or beast, may the priest eat.

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also a sign of mourning (Lev. 21: 5, 10; Deut. 14: 1); and to let it grow long as the Nazarites did (Numb. 6: 5), was condemned, possibly as this was the sign of a very primitive society.

Wine restrictions (21), enlarged in Lev. 10: 1-9, were due not so much to prohibition ideals, as to the principle of asceticism. Self-denial is a good thing, and to primitive thinking the abstinence from food and drink of all kinds gave deity an unhindered opportunity to work. Our Lenten practices express a similar idea.

Marriage restrictions (22) also tended to remove the priesthood from the common herd and added to their prestige, and their corresponding nearness to Deity. Later legislation prohibited the high priest from marriage with any widow (Lev. 21: 14).

44: 23-27. DUTIES OF THE PRIEST. These are clearly outlined. They must teach the difference between the sacred and the secular, the clean and the unclean (cf. Lev. 10: 10; Hag. 2: 11; Mal. 2: 7). This is a long remove from the note of the prophet. They must act as judges in cases of dispute, and must guard the regulations and the customs of the sacred festivals, and the sabbaths, and must avoid all defilement (cf. Numb. 19: 11-14).

44: 28-31. THE DUES OF THE PRIESTHOOD are only suggested in these vss. They were to have no inheritance, and no property, for Yahweh was their inheritance. But certain parts of the sacrifices which were Yahweh's were their portion, the meal-offering (cf. Lev. 2: 3; 7: 9-11), the sin-offering (cf. Lev. 6: 18; 7: 6, 7; Numb. 18: 9, 10), and the guilt-offerings, that were usually related to the sin-offerings, and the things that were devoted, or the thank-offerings (cf. Lev. 7: 11-18; Numb. 18: 24). While this can by no means be complete, it would seem that in a prosperous community the priest would not fare badly. Conditions have very greatly changed since the sons of Eli were spoken evil against because they insisted that the priests' share of the offering should not be left so entirely to accident (1 Sam. 2: 12-17).

Chapter 45

45: 1–46: 24. REGULATIONS CONCERNING LAND AND OFFERINGS. These chapters are exceedingly complex, and show such varying relations with other parts of the book that it is not conceivable that all parts come from the same period (cf. Introd. xix, li). 45: 1-8, divisions of the central or sacred area of the land are made; 9-12, honest weights, measures and exchange demanded; 13-17, a donation is

45:1 Now when you allot the land for inheritance
you shall set apart the sacred
tract, dedicated from the land to Yahweh,
eight and a third miles long and
six and two-third miles [1] broad, it
shall be sacred through all its area.[2]
3 Then from this strip you shall measure
off a strip [3] eight and a third miles
long and three and a third miles broad,
4 a sacred portion of the land for the
priests, who minister at the sanctuary,
drawing near to minister to Yahweh;
for them it shall be a place for dwellings;
and the sacred sanctuary shall be
2 therein, on a plot 875 feet square, with
an open space of eighty-seven and a half
feet all around.
5 Then another strip eight and a third
miles long and three and a third miles
broad shall be for the Levites, who
minister in the temple-buildings; it
shall be their possession, for cities in
6 which to dwell.[4] Then you shall set
apart as city property a strip eight and
a third miles long and a mile and two-thirds
broad along side of the sacred
tract; it shall be for all the house of
Israel.
7 And to the prince, on both sides of
the sacred tract and the city property,

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given to the prince; 45:18–46:15, offerings for festivals, sabbaths, new moons, and free-will stated; 46:16-18, restrictions made on property; and 46:19-24, the kitchens for the temple service described, are thrown together within this compass.

45:1-8. THE DIVISIONS OF LAND IN THE CENTRAL AREA. This is called the *Terumah* (44:30; 45:1, 6, 7), which means, the thing lifted off, or lifted up, or the part taken from the whole, and is so general that usage alone makes it definite. But inasmuch as it may be used for cereal products, or a tract of land, or part of an animal sacrifice, or material for a garment, or a donation, or for any contribution, no single term can do it justice. *Oblation* of our English versions conveys essentially the correct idea, but that is a technical, theological term, that is meaningless to the reading public. *Sacred tract* has been used in the translation (1, 6, 7), where Moffatt uses sacred district, which is equally appropriate. In other places *donation* more correctly conveys the meaning (13, 16).

The land is to be allotted (1), to the various parties, not by the traditional priestly method of casting the lot, probably the urim and thummim, and thereby profiting by divine direction (Josh. 14:1; 16:1; Deut. 33:8), nor does it appear to be guided by Yahweh himself. The usual formula does not introduce these verses, a donation is made to Yahweh himself, and the emphasis is, *you* shall measure, *you* shall set apart, so and so. The divisions have already been determined, and that apparently by the author (cf. 47:21; 48:8-22).

The sacred tract dedicated to Yahweh is a strip of land running 8⅓ miles east and west, by 6⅔ miles north and south. Its location depends on the tribal boundaries which are related to this sacred tract (48:1-8, 23-29). This tract is divided into 2 equal parts, strips running east and west, each one the full length, and 3⅓ miles in width. The northern one is for the Levites and the southern one is the possession of the priests. In the middle of the tract of the priests stand the temple buildings on a square 875 feet (42:20), around which there runs a boulevard, or an open space, 87½ feet in width (2). Lying to the south of this priestly area is the city property, of the same length, 8⅓ miles, with a breadth of 1⅔ miles, in which the city itself, abutted east and west by free land, is situated. These 3 strips together form a square 8⅓ miles to the side, in the exact center of which stood the temple area, as outlined in 42:20.

The priests hold the position of prestige, because of their relation to the sanctuary, but they have also important property rights. One wonders if the writer who declared they should have no landed property in Israel (44:28) also outlined this part of the program. If so, he was vesting this sacred tract in Yah-

facing [5] the sacred tract and the city property, west from the western side and east from the eastern side, his strip shall in length be the equal of [6] one of the strips from the western to the
8 eastern boundary. This land shall be his property in Israel, and the princes of Israel [7] shall never again oppress my people, for the land shall belong to the house of Israel, according to their tribes.

9 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, Enough, to you O princes of Israel. Cut short violence and plunder. Practise justice, stop driving out my people. Oracle of
10 the Lord Yahweh. Accurate scales, and a correct ephah, and a just bath you
11 shall have. The ephah and the bath shall be the same. The bath shall contain the tenth of an homer, also the ephah the tenth of an homer; the homer
12 shall be the standard. And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs; five [8] shekels shall be five shekels, and twenty [8] shekels shall be twenty shekels, and fifty[8] shekels shall be your maneh.

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weh (1), and the priests were but Yahweh's ministers. A layman might think this somewhat casuistic.

The open space in vs. 2 has sometimes been compared to the great boulevard that ran around the city of Babylon in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. The author was certainly thinking in terms of order and beauty (cf. 48: 15-17).

Property is provided for the prince, a strip 8⅓ miles wide, running from the east of the sacred tract to the Jordan, and from the west of the same district to the western sea (4, cf. 48: 21). The restriction that follows, that he must not oppress my people, implies past oppression. History is not silent concerning the sins of royalty. Some may have considered David rather high-handed both before and during his reign (1 Sam. 25: 2-8; 2 Sam. 20: 1, 2; 21: 6-10). Solomon put a vast multitude to task work (1 Kings 5: 13-17), and Ahab was scarcely fair to Naboth (1 Kings 21), while Jehoiachim heavily taxed the land (2 Kings 23: 35), and Manasseh and others left an unsavory reputation for persecution and bloodshed. At all periods there was resentment on the part of many Hebrews against the unjust exploitation of the people by those in authority (cf. 1 Sam. 8: 14; Deut. 17: 16, 17). Further restrictions on the prince are noted in 46: 16-18.

This property of the prince is a donation, and ultimately belongs to the house of Israel. This has in it a note of democracy, if not of communism.

45: 9-12. HONEST WEIGHTS, MEASURES AND COINAGE ARE DEMANDED. In a program such as we find in chapters 40-48, this is out of place, unless it applies to the commercial relations entailed in connection with the temple services. If so, it has more to do with the priest than with the prince, and by some it has been so interpreted. No doubt thievery and short measure might be practised around the temple as well as in the business world. But this sounds like a paragraph from one of the old prophets. It was Amos who denounced the business men for having double weights, one for purchase and the other for sale (Amos 8: 5), and Micah speaks of scant measure and wicked balances (Micah 6: 10, 11). Nor were the lawgivers lax in their approach to business ethics (Lev. 19: 35, 36; Deut. 25: 13-15).

These ancient measures can be estimated only approximately. The *homer*, that was made the standard for both the dry and the liquid measure, was the same as the *cor*, and equal to 80 gallons. The *ephah* for the dry and the *bath* for the liquid measure was one-tenth of that, or 8 gallons.

In standards of value we are at a great loss, as there is always fluctuation. But one *maneh*, the Greek mina, was equal to 50 shekels, and to 1,000 gerahs. Coinage came late in the history of civilization, probably not earlier than 600. Barter in kind being the early method of carrying on business, it is noticeable that the revenues of the prince are to be given in kind, thus perpetuating the early method.

13 This is the donation you shall make,
the sixth of an ephah of every homer
of wheat, and the sixth of an ephah of
14 every homer of barley, and a definite
measure of oil (the tenth of a bath is an
homer),[9] the tenth of a bath out of
every cor, for ten baths make a homer;
15 and one sheep out of every flock of two
hundred from the well-watered lands of
Israel, for the meal-offering, the burnt-
offering and the peace-offerings in order
to cleanse them. Oracle of the Lord
16 Yahweh. All the people of the land shall
offer this [10] donation to the prince
17 in Israel. And the prince shall have
responsibility for the burnt-offerings,
and the meal-offering, and the drink-
offering, on the festivals, the new moons
and the sabbaths, at all the assemblies
of the house of Israel. He shall provide
the sin-offering, and the meal-offering
and the burnt-offering, and the
peace-offerings in order to cleanse the
house of Israel.

18 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, in the
first month, on the first day of the
month, you shall take an unblemished
19 bullock and cleanse the sanctuary; and
the priest shall take some of the blood
of the sin-offering, and put it on [5] the
doorposts of the house, and on [5] the
four corners of the ledge of the altar
and on the posts of the gate of the
20 inner court. So shall you do in the
seventh month on the first day of the
month [11] for the one who goes astray
and for the simple minded. So shall
21 you cleanse the house. In the first month
on the fourteenth day of the month
shall there be to you a feast [12] of
passover for seven days; you shall

45:13-17. THE DONATION TO THE PRINCE. This was that which was *taken off* the produce of the land, or from the flock, as tribute or tax for the prince. It was a levy that had been customary from time immemorial to the head of the tribe, and then to the leader or ruler. Because of leadership and care for the whole family, or tribe, or nation, both in times of peace and war, it was considered his due. In this case it is a very small percentage, one-sixtieth of the important grains, one one-hundredth of the oil, and one two-hundredth of the flock. We have no means of comparing this with the practice in the days of the kingdom, but one would not be wrong in guessing that this represents a very definite reduction in taxation.

In return for this donation or allowance, the prince has serious responsibilities to justify this maintenance. He must provide the sacrifices for these products of the soil and the flock (15), and he must supply the offerings for festivals as outlined (17). Late records intimate that two of the good kings had provided animals for public sacrifices, so theory follows on the heels of practice (2 Chron. 30:24; 35:7). If we compare the religious privileges accorded the prince with those exercised by Solomon, we shall find that the glory of the kingship has faded in the affairs of both state and church (cf. 1 Kings 8:12-15, 22, 23, 54-61, 62-64). What the king has lost, the priest has gained.

Well-watered (15) is in the Septuagint replaced by the word for families, reading from all the families of Israel, which may be the original.

To *cleanse* in vs. 17, where other translations read, to make atonement for, or to reconcile, is close to the meaning of the Hebrew, while the older phrases have been corrupted by theological speculation. To atone, in the days of the King James translation, meant to make-at-one, without any suggestion of any theory of redemption. To reconcile means to restore to friendship after alienation. But the Hebrew *kapper* means simply to cover over, or to wipe off, or wash off. With the idea that sin was infectious, and that an article or an individual might become contaminated, washing or wiping off, that is cleansing, is probably as near as we can get to the original idea.

45:18-20. ATONEMENT MADE FOR THE SANCTUARY. Cleansing is again the correct word. The sanctuary might become defiled by contact with the people. The underlying idea is the same as that found in 42:13, 14, and 46:19-23. The sugges-

22 eat [13] unleavened bread. And on that
day the prince shall provide for himself
and for all the common people a
23 bullock as a sin-offering; indeed during
the seven days of the festival, each
day he shall provide the burnt-offering
to Yahweh, seven unblemished bullocks
and seven unblemished rams each day,
with a he-goat each day as a sin-offering.
24 Also he shall provide as a meal-offering
an ephah for each bullock, and an ephah
for each ram, with a hin of oil for each
25 ephah. In the seventh month, on the
fifteenth day of the month, he shall provide
for the feast during seven days,
even the same as those; as the sin-offering,
as the burnt-offering, as the
meal-offering and the oil.

46:1 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, The gate
of the inner court facing eastward shall
be closed during the six working days;
but it shall be open on the sabbath,
2 and on the day of the new moon. And
the prince shall enter from without by
way of the portico of the gate, and he
shall stand by the post of the gate
while the priests offer his burnt-offering,
and his peace-offering; then he shall
prostrate himself at the threshold of the
gate, and go out. But the gate shall
3 not be closed until evening. Also the
common people shall prostrate themselves
at the door of this gate before
Yahweh on sabbaths and new moons.
4 And the burnt-offering that the prince
shall offer to Yahweh on the sabbath
shall be seven unblemished lambs and
5 an unblemished ram; the meal-offering
being an ephah for a ram, and for the
lambs an offering, a gift according to
his ability, and a hin of oil to an ephah.
6 And on the day of the new moon, an
unblemished bullock, six lambs and a
7 ram, they shall be unblemished, and an
ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for
the ram, shall be for the meal-offering,
and for the lambs it shall be according
to ones ability, but there shall be a
8 hin of oil to an ephah. Then when the
prince enters, he shall come in by way
of the portico of the gate, and he shall
go out by the same way.
9 But when the common people enter
the presence of Yahweh at the time of
their festival seasons, those who enter
by the northern gate, shall go out by
way of the southern gate; while those
who enter by the southern gate shall go
out by way of the northern gate. No
one shall return by the gate through
which he entered, but he shall go
10 straight ahead. And when they enter,
the prince shall enter in their midst,
and when they go out, he shall go out
with them.[1]

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tion is that this cleansing function should be carried out twice a year, in the 1st and again in the 7th month (18, 20). In later history, this the day of the atonement was annual, never semiannual, and the regulations became much more elaborate than those here indicated (cf. Lev. 16:11-22, espc. 15-19).

45:21-25. PASSOVER AND TABERNACLES ARE TO BE OBSERVED. Again these regulations differ from those found in Numb. 28:16, 25; 29:12 and Lev. 23:24, indicating that so long as religion is vital, there must be constant change in its expressions and forms. The feast of tabernacles became very important in the post-exilic period (cf. Ezra 3:4; Neh. 8:14; Zech. 14:16).

Chapter 46

46:1-11. SABBATHS AND NEW MOONS. In the late period the sabbath became growingly insignificant. In the complex civilization the one day in seven for economic, social, and religious purposes became more and more important, while the further people were removed from the nomadic stage, the more fictitious became the place of the new moon. In early Christianity it had no function.

On these occasions the eastern gate of the inner court was opened, whereas it was closed during the 6 working-days. The prince was required to take a leading part in the ritual; he had to make certain offerings (2); to stand by the gate while these were being offered; then to prostrate, or bow down in worship. He was also required on festival occasions to go in and out in the midst of the common people (46:9, 10; Exod. 23:17). Such processions were to be orderly, each one going straight ahead, and not returning by the door through which he had entered.

11 And on the feasts and the assemblies,
the meal-offering shall be an ephah for
a bullock, an ephah for the ram, and
according to ones ability for the lambs,
12 with a hin of oil for each ephah. And
when the prince offers a free-will-offering,
a burnt-offering, or a peace-offering,
as a free-will-offering to Yahweh, the
gate facing eastward shall be opened
for him, and he shall offer his burnt-offering,
or his peace-offerings as he
does on the sabbaths; but when he
goes out the gate shall be closed behind
13 him. And he shall provide an unblemished
year-old lamb, daily as a burnt-offering
to Yahweh; every morning he
14 shall provide it. Also he shall provide
a meal-offering every morning, the sixth
of an ephah, and one-third of a hin of
oil to moisten the fine flour, a meal-offering
to Yahweh. These are the permanent
statutes for the continual burnt-
15 offering. Further, he shall provide the
lamb, and the meal-offering, and the
oil every morning, as a continual burnt-offering.
16 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, If the
prince make a gift from his inheritance
to one of his sons, it shall belong to
his son; it is his property through inheritance.
17 But if he make a gift from
his inheritance to one of his servants, it
shall belong to him until the year of
release; then it shall return to the
prince; only, the inheritance [2] given
18 his sons remains to them. Nor shall the
prince take away any of the inheritance
of the people which belongs to them
(from their possession).[3] From his
own property shall he give an inheritance
to his sons, so that none of my
people may be driven out of his possession.
19 Then he brought me through the entrance
beside the gate to the sacred
chambers of the priests, facing northward,
and lo! there at the extreme west
20 of it was a place. And he said to me,
This is the place where the priests shall
boil the guilt-offering and the sin-offering,
and where they shall bake the meal-offering,
so that they need not bring
them into the outer court.
21 Then he brought me to the outer

46: 12-15. Various Offerings Regulated. The free-will offering (12) which the prince may wish to make has special prescriptions. It differs from those of the sabbaths and new moons, in that when it is over the eastern door of the inner court must be closed (12); in the earlier cases the door remained open until the evening.

A daily, morning burnt-offering is arranged for at the expense of the prince (13-15). At a later period a daily, evening burnt-offering was added to the devotions of the people (Exod. 29: 38-42; Numb. 28: 3-8).

46: 16-18. Property Held in Perpetuity. It is an old principle that the family inheritance should remain permanently in the family (1 Kings 21: 2-4). The ancestors had possessed it; they were buried in it; they watched over it; and the descendants owed them service and reverence. The living were always gathered to their forefathers, but the ancestors were never far away from the living. Hence the prince was not permitted to let the donation go out of his family, or to take away the inheritance of any of the people. Should he give a portion to a servant, it must be returned to the family in the year of release, for the land, that was the Jubilee year. A basic argument for this was that the land belonged to Yahweh (cf. Lev. 25: 23-28; Jer. 34: 9-12).

46: 19-24. The Kitchens of the Sanctuary. This section would be more in place if it followed 42: 14, though a phrase in 46: 19, *beside the gate*, is not in harmony with the location in 42: 14. Two sets of kitchens are here provided, one lying to the extreme west of the priest's chambers (19, 20), and the other set, one in each of the four corners of the outer court (21-24).

Those in the rear of the priest's chambers (19, 20) are used for cooking the priestly portion of the guilt-, sin-, and meal-offerings which was eaten by the priests in some near-by apartment in the inner court. Convenient, no doubt, but they were not so placed, primarily for convenience. The assigned reason was that they need not bring them, the offer-

court, and guided me to the four
corners of the court, and lo! at each
22 corner of the court, at the four corners
of the court were four small [4] courts,
all four were of one measurement, fifty-
two and a half feet broad and sixty
23 feet long; and round each of the four
of them, was masonry and the boiling-places
were placed underneath the
24 masonry, round about. And he said
to me, These are the houses of the boiling-places,
where the ministers of the
house boil the sacrifices for the people.

47:1 And he brought me back to the door
of the house, and lo! water was flowing
from under the threshold of the
house eastward; for the front of the
house was eastward; and the waters ran
down underneath from the south side of
2 the house, south of the altar. Then he
brought me out by way of the north
gate, and led me round the outside to
the outside gate, facing the east, and
lo! the water was trickling down on the
3 right side. Now the man with the
measuring line in his hand, went eastward
and measured 1,750 feet, then he
led me through the water; the water was
4 ankle deep. Again he measured 1,750
feet, and then led me through the
water; the water was knee deep. He
again measured 1,750 feet, and led me
through the water; the water was thigh
5 deep. He measured another 1,750 feet,
a stream that it was impossible to ford,
for the water had risen deep enough for
swimming; a stream that could not be
forded.
6 And he said to me, Have you looked
carefully? Then he led me and turned
7 me back to the bank of the stream; now

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ings to be eaten, into the outer court (20). Underlying this is the theory of the infection of sin, and the infecting power of things that were holy, that we noticed earlier (cf. 42:13, 14; 45:19-23). In carrying the food from the people's kitchens in the corners of the outer court, across the court, it might become contaminated and bring injury to the priests.

The people's kitchens were in the outer court (21-24), and here the ministers, Levites, prepared the sacred meal for the people, which was eaten by them in the outer court. Such a sacred meal, eating with or communing with God, was an essential part of the ritual from the earliest days. A primitive form of this was found at Shiloh (1 Sam. 2:14; cf. 2 Chron. 35:13), and the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist is its latest expression.

Chapter 47

47:1–48:35. THE LAND OF PALESTINE; ITS FERTILIZATION AND ITS TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS. United in a common theme we have a collection of fragments analyzed as follows: 47:1-12, the fertilization of the land; 47:13-20, the boundaries of the land as a whole; 47:21-23, privileges of the alien resident; 48:1-7, 23-29, the tribal divisions in the north and the south respectively; 48:8-22, the sacred tract, surrounding the temple, an intrusion between the tribal divisions; 48:30-35, the city gates, a supplement to 48:15-19.

47:1-12. THE RIVER OF LIFE will fertilize the land. This is an introduction to the boundaries and the divisions of the land, and as such is fitting, as it makes the land ready for occupancy. Yet in fact its relation to the land and to these chapters is the slightest. The stream is a product of the temple from which it flows, it fertilizes the near-by valley, creates an oasis in the desert, flows into the Dead Sea and purifies its waters, making possible an abundance of fish. Related essentially to the temple, it is scarcely on the margin of the country. Moreover, while there is a fountain in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and a valley that runs south by east to the Dead Sea, only in name and general outline do they correspond to this. The fountain is not on the south of the altar, the stream is not perennial, the temple, if located in the midst of the tribes as indicated in 48:1-7, 23-29, could not be the source of a stream that could ever arrive at the Dead Sea, nor if that were possible could such a stream attain the stated depths within the distances indicated in the present lo-

when he turned me back, lo! on[1]
both banks of the stream were many
trees.
8 Then he said to me, These waters are
flowing to the eastern region, and they
shall descend the plain and enter the
sea, to the bitter water,[2] so that the
9 water shall be healed. And wherever
the stream[3] goes, every kind of life
that swarms shall live, and fish shall be
abundant, for these waters come there
that they may be healed; and everything
10 shall live where the stream goes. And
fishermen shall take up their stations by
it from En-gedi up to En-eglaim; spread-
ing places for nets there shall be, and
there shall be every kind of fish, like
the fish of the Mediterranean sea, very
11 abundant. But its marshes and its
swamps, shall not be healed; they shall
12 be left for salt. And on both its banks,
all kinds of food-trees shall grow.
Their leaves shall not wither, nor shall
their fruit fail; but they shall bear

cality. With a minimum of local geography and a maximum of the ideal, there is a close approximation to eschatology. The stream, its source, and its results are supernatural. Where nature failed, God will intervene for the well-being of his people. It is probable that this hope for the future is more indebted to the fertile-laden rivers that flowed out of the garden of Eden than to the pool of Siloam and the Kidron valley, that lie to the east and south of the city. Like most of chapters 40–48, there is an ideal element in it, reaching beyond the barren present out into the future, prolific with the fruit of dreams.

If topographically it is incomplete, the reason is that it is symbolic of that in the world of human achievement that is unhampered by land-contours or by geography. "There shall be no Alps," is the lodestar that guides the fashioner of tomorrow.

In 46:23 the prophet was in the outer court observing the boiling-places, one in each of the corners of the outer court. Now he is led to the door of the house, apparently in the inner court, and then taken to the north gate, led through it and around the outside wall to the east of the temple area. Here he is shown the stream flowing from under the threshold eastward. It grows deeper and fuller in the district where ordinarily a stream running over scant soil with a porous limestone base quickly ends in rivulets that disappear among the stones in the rocky bed. Hence this stream must be supplied from the primeval deep. This writer is depending on the temple, and the God of the temple for the future of his people, and then fruit-trees will flourish in the plain (7), the strongly alkali soil will be sweetened, and the waters of the Dead Sea will be healed and the fish therein will be abundant (9-12). From En-gedi, an oasis of considerable importance, lying on the west of the Dead Sea about midway between the northern and the southern end of the sea, and En-eglaim, which is unknown, will be a fisherman's paradise. This program of reconstruction on the part of the writer, a charming picture, rich in promise, is cast in the economic mold of peasant experience, fish, fruit, and a few simples for medicinal purposes. The Palestinian dreamer of today talks of sodium chloride, phosphates, iodides, electric light and power, and world-wide commerce; and this in the hands of human enterprise is much nearer realization than are the hopes of the ancient prophet.

Marshes and swamps (11), in small areas, were to be left untouched by this irrigation scheme so that a supply of necessary salt should be guaranteed. From time immemorial the Dead Sea has amply supplied this need to all within reasonable distance of its waters. At times of high water its saline waters flood the pits and ponds on its margins, and under the rapid evaporation heavy deposits of salt are quickly formed. These are pulled or dug up by the natives in cakes of varying thickness, up to four or six inches, and are packed to market. With this salt there are small quantities

fruit every month, for the waters for them come from the sanctuary, and its fruit is for food, and its leaves are medicinal.

13 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, This [4] shall be the boundary by which you shall divide the land as an inheritance for the twelve tribes of Israel; Joseph
14 having two portions; then you shall divide it out to each, one the same as another. I swore to give it to your fathers, so this land shall fall to you as
15 an inheritance. This shall be the boundary of the land.

As for the north; from the Mediterranean sea by way [5] of Hethlon to the entrance of Hamath [6] toward
16 Zedad, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between Damascus and the border of Hamath, Hazar-enon [7] which is on [1]
17 the border of Hauran. Then the border shall run from the sea to Hazar-enon, the border of Damascus northward; and the north, northward also is the district of Hamath; and this is the northern border.

18 As for the eastern border, you shall measure between Hauran and Damascus, and between Gilead and the land of Israel, the Jordan from the district of the eastern sea; and this is the eastern border.

19 As for the southern border; from Tamar to Meribah-kadesh along the brook to the Mediterranean sea; and this is the southern border.

20 As for the western border; the Medi-

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of phosphates and iodides, but the product, even in the raw state, is wholesome, and today furnishes most of the native supply.

The imagery of this picture rises on the far horizons of human thought, and appears again and again in the long reaches of later history (Joel 3: 18; Zech. 14: 8; Ps. 46: 4); it has fashioned one of the most comforting concepts of early Christianity (Rev. 22: 1-5), and still brings its vision of peace, through the hymnists, to western Christianity.

47: 13-20. THE BOUNDARIES OF THE LAND. This is connected with 48: 1-7, 23-29, by vss. 13 and 14. *Twelve,* in the twelve tribes of Israel, is an all-inclusive number, rather than a definite one. Tribes such as Reuben and Simeon had long passed out of actual existence. Levi had become an official title and thus had lost its tribal function. Gad and Machir had made no impress on history, and Machir falls from the tribal enumeration, though Gad's name is preserved. There had been a Dinah tribe, which remained as little more than a memory. But the number twelve is orthodox, and must be preserved. This is true with not a few Arabian tribes, of which we find an echo in the O. T. narratives (cf. Gen. 25: 2-4, 13-16). The origin of this probably lay outside of the number of children born to any one tribal ancestor. It has been noted that in Semitic thought, twelve functions much more widely than in genealogy. There were 12 gates to the city, 12 months in the year, 12 by 30 degrees in the circumference of a circle, 12 stones in the breast-plate of the high priest, and 12 signs of the Zodiac. This has raised the question as to the actual origin of the importance of this sacred number. At a very early period the Babylonians were acquainted with the Zodiac, and believed that these star clusters were closely related to earthly phenomena and were significant in human destiny. It is no wonder that some find the origin of twelve to rest in this early interpretation of the heavenly bodies (cf. A. Causse, *Rev. d'Hist. et de Phil. Relig.* Ju., Oct. 1934, 285-336). Color is added to this by the fact that it is with Ezekiel and the priestly writers, when the 12 tribes had only a fictitious existence, that insistence on this number became marked.

Joseph is granted a double portion (13), as a tribal division into Ephraim and Manasseh had been effected in early days, and each division had been important in numbers and possessions.

Boundary lines on the north (15-17) are far from certain, as in both grammar and geography reconstruction is impossible. Its similarity to Numb. 34: 7-9, to terranean sea from the border up to directly opposite the entrance at Hamath; and this is the western border.

21 So shall you divide the land among
22 you to the tribes of Israel, and allot it as an inheritance for yourselves, also for the aliens who live in your midst, who have reared families among you; they shall be to you as native born among the children of Israel, and shall be allotted an inheritance with you in
23 the midst of the tribes of Israel. In whatever tribe an alien resides, there shall you give him his inheritance. Oracle of the Lord Yahweh.

48:1 Now these are the names of the tribes on the northern limit from the sea [1] by way of Hethlon to the entrance at Hamath as far as Hazar-enon, at the border of Damascus northward by [2] Hamath, there shall be from east to west one strip to Dan.

2 And on the border of Dan, from east to west, one strip to Asher.

3 And on the border of Asher, from east to west, one strip to Naphthali.

4 And on the border of Naphthali, from east to west, one strip to Manasseh.

5 And on the border of Manasseh, from east to west, one strip to Ephraim.

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which it is textually related, is of slight aid. The border passes through Hethalon (15), probably Heitela, seven miles inland, from a point north of Tripoli, thence to the pass at Hamath, and on to the region of Damascus. This is the northern limit reported for the kingdom of David and Solomon (2 Sam. 8: 9; 1 Kings 8: 65), and naturally the ideals of a later day will not be less than the heralded achievements of early history. Efforts have been made to find the places above mentioned south of the Lebanons, but this is no more than wishful research. On the eastern border, the Jordan alone is definite (cf. Numb. 34: 10), the term, between Hauran and Damascus, only continues the confusion of the northern boundary. The southern line runs from Tamar, which is uncertain, through Kadesh-Barnea to the Wady el-Arish, thence to the Mediterranean, which is a few miles south of Gaza. The western border is the coast-line between the most westerly points of the territory south and north. While Zedad, Berothah, Sibraim, and Hazar-enon cannot be located (cf. Numb. 34: 7-12), and there are no clues to the eastern boundary lying north of the Jordan, the territory included is equivalent to that of the kingdom in its most glorious days, apart from the possessions across the Jordan.

One feature throws light on the type of literature with which we are dealing, that is, that from north to south in this sketch is a distance of about 250 miles, while the sum total of the tribal possessions, indicated in the text, is less than 108 miles (48: 1-7, 23-29). In religious theory, inspiration and statistical accuracy do not always walk hand in hand.

47: 21-23. THE INHERITANCE OF THE RESIDENT ALIEN. These people, most of whom had Canaanitish ancestry, to whom the land had originally belonged, and hence had long enjoyed rights, from which they could not easily be dislodged, were always assured certain privileges (cf. Exod. 21: 20; 23: 9; Deut. 10: 18; 14: 29; 24: 14-19). These provisions of inheritance are but the reassertion of recognized, ancient rights. Certain limitations, however, of privileges that some of the aliens were enjoying were in process of being established (cf. 44: 4-9).

Chapter 48

48: 1-7, 23-28. THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NORTHERN AND THE SOUTHERN TRIBES RESPECTIVELY. The 12 tribes are all arranged on the west side of the Jordan, with some marked changes from their historical locations; 7 are in the north and 5 in the south. The old relation of Judah and Benjamin to each other and to the city is reversed. Issachar and Zebulun are brought from the fertile lands north of Esdraelon and placed in the dry and barren southland. Reuben and Gad are moved to the west of the Jordan, and Gad, that had enjoyed the hills and streams of Gilead, is assigned the sandy steppes of the south.

6 And on the border of Ephraim, from
east to west, one strip to Reuben.
7 And on the border of Reuben, from
east to west, one strip to Judah.
8 And on the border of Judah from east
to west you shall set apart a sacred tract,
eight and one-third miles broad, and
its length from east to west the same
as one of the divisions, and the sanctuary
shall be in the midst of it.
9 The sacred tract that you shall set
apart for Yahweh shall be eight and
one-third miles long, and six and two-
10 third [3] miles broad. And of this,
the sacred tract for the priests, along
the north, shall be eight and one-third
miles, while westward its breadth shall
be three and two-third miles, and eastward
its breadth shall be three and
two-third miles, and along the south it
shall be eight and one-third miles; and
the sanctuary of Yahweh shall be in
11 the midst of it. For the sacred priests,
the sons of Zadok, who kept my charge
and did not go astray, even as the Levites
went astray, when the children of
12 Israel went astray, it shall be a sacred
tract [4] for them, from the most sacred
tract of land beside [2] the border of
the Levites.
13 Also for the Levites [5] shall be a
strip alongside the border of the priests,
eight and one-third miles long, and three
and two-third miles broad, the whole
length eight and one-third miles.[6]
14 Now none of this shall be sold, or
exchanged,[7] or alienated.[8] It is the
choice land, for it is sacred to Yahweh.
15 The remaining space, one and two-
third miles broad, the face of which is
eight and one-third miles long, shall be
common land for the city, for dwellings
and open spaces, and the city shall be
16 in its midst. And these shall be the
measurements of the city; the northern
border shall be a little more than one
and one-third miles, also the southern
border shall be a little more than one
and one-third miles, also the eastern
border shall be a little more than one
and one-third miles and the western
border shall likewise be a little more
17 than one and one-third miles; and there
shall be a boulevard to the city, on the
north nearly 146 yards wide, on the
south 146 yards, and eastward 146
18 yards, and westward 146 yards. And the
remaining space, nearly three and one-
third miles east and west alongside the
sacred tract (and it shall be alongside

Locating 7 tribes in the north and 5 in the south, in part, conforms to history and topography. The more fertile soil was in the north, and here always was gathered the larger population. But why this transfer of tribes is far from certain. They are not segregated, as in actual history, according to maternal relationship. Has tribal importance dictated this arrangement, or was it the private prejudice of the writer? The positions of Judah, Reuben and Simeon are improved, those of Issachar, Zebulun and Gad have been seriously impaired. Judah might be rewarded for loyalty in religion, but as for Reuben and Simeon no reason for such preferment appears on the horizon. The changes seem purely arbitrary.

Also no recognition is taken of the topography of the country, or the size and importance of the individual tribe in this reorganization. Straight lines are drawn from east to west, without regard to hill or dale, type of soil, or water supply, and a strip 8⅓ miles wide is allotted to each tribe, regardless of need; and the sacred tract, and the city area, all together form a square 8⅓ miles, likewise ignoring all topographical features; both schemes are utterly incongruous anywhere in Palestine. The whole may be a pretty picture, but it is quite impracticable. Efforts to prove that this places the Holy City on the ancient site of Samaria are beside the mark, for the man who talks about the measuring-line probably never carried the chain for a surveying party. At best, all is visionary, and is as unworkable as the vision in 1: 4-21, 23-25. Classing it as eschatology puts it in the realm of symbolism, and lays emphasis on its teaching, in which is its importance. The thought of the writer may never be adequately understood by an interpreter, but it is possible that these artificial boundary lines were intended to teach the necessity of orderly tribal life, with happy, intertribal rela-

the sacred tract),[9] shall belong to the city, and its produce shall be for food
19 for those who work in the city. And the workers [10] in the city, out of all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it.
20 And all the sacred tract shall be eight and one-third miles, squared;[11] that is, with [12] the property of the city; and you shall set it apart as the most sacred tract.

21 And what remains on both sides of the sacred tract and the city property shall belong to the prince; that facing [2] the eastern border of the sacred tract eight and one-third miles, and westward facing [12] the western border eight and one-third miles; joining the portions [13] belonging to the prince, so that the sacred tract with the temple sanctuary shall be in the midst
22 of it. Also the property [14] of the Levites, and the city property shall be in the midst of that which belongs to the prince. To the prince shall be the strip lying between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin.

23 As for the rest of the tribes; from the eastern border to the western border shall be one strip to Benjamin.

24 And on the border of Benjamin, from east to west, one strip to Simeon.

25 And on the border of Simeon, from east to west, one strip to Issachar.

26 And on the border of Issachar, from east to west, one strip to Zebulun.

27 And from the border of Zebulun, from east to west, one strip to Gad.

28 And from the border of Gad, to the south, the border shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribah-kadesh, along the brook to [14a] the Mediterranean sea.

29 This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance [15] to the tribes of Israel, and these are their divisions. Oracle of the Lord Yahweh.
30 And these shall be the exits of the city; on the north; its measurement is a lit-
31 tle over one and one-third miles; the gates of the city follow the names of the tribes of Israel; three gates shall be on the north, one gate for Reuben, and one gate for Judah, and one gate
32 for Levi. And on the eastern border, its measurements [16] is over one and one-third miles, there shall be three gates, one gate for Joseph, and one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan.

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tions, and equal rights to all, in the measure deserved.

48:8-22. THE SACRED TRACT, with the temple protected by gates and guards in the middle of the priests' portion, and the portion of the Levites lying to the north, is an insert between vss. 7 and 23. It is found again with little variation in 45:1, 3-8.

Two features deserve special notice. The 1st is the insistence that there shall be no alienation of property (14, cf. 46:16-18), which reminds one of the cry, "three acres of land and a cow," that at times has been so insistent on the part of peasant communities. It may have been an outcome of exile experiences, and may be an effort to support the property claims of the descendants of those who had been dispossessed by the misfortunes of war.

The city boulevard is another noticeable feature. Open spaces have always been a natural part of Palestinian life. At no period was Jerusalem, its most important city, so large but any of its citizens could, in a few minutes, reach the open country. These privileges were prized and defended (Isa. 5:8), and here provision, if not ample, is made for such. The city as planned is to be 1⅓ miles square, with an open space, or a boulevard all around it, 146 feet in width (15-17).

Provision is also made for suburban gardens for the laborers who come to the city from the various tribes (18). No suggestion is made as to the kind of work they shall do, the length of time they shall remain in the city, the wages they shall be paid, if any. Would they be lackeys for the priesthood as their ancestors had been for Solomon, each tribe making a contribution for a special month (1 Kings 5:13-18)? Like many other features of the reconstruction program, much is indefinite, possibly the whole vision represents a venture in adjustment.

48:30-35. THE GATES OF THE CITY. The measurements of the city walls, 33 And on the southern border, its measurement is over one and one-third miles, there shall be three gates, one gate for Simeon, and one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun.

34 And on the western border, over one and one-third miles, there shall be three gates,[17] one gate for Gad, and one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphthali.

35 And the circuit shall be about five and one-half miles; and the name of the city, henceforth shall be

YAHWEH-SHAMMAH.

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worked into the text like the clumsiest of glosses, are vain repetition. Three gates are to be on each side of the city, each one named after one of the tribes. These may be only a part of the orderly pattern, without any very practical significance. They can scarcely be intended as the gates to be used by workmen from the respective tribes as they went back and forth to their gardens in the suburbs. Groups of humans could scarcely be restrained to act so rigidly as that. There seems to be more of eschatological theory, here and elsewhere, than of practical architecture. The whole scheme leads up to the conclusion, which is the text for chapters 40–48, the name of the city is *Yahweh Shammah.* Yahweh is there.

CRITICAL NOTES

CHAPTER 1.

1. The phrase ואני בתוך-הגולה על-נהר-כבר is due to the Babylonian glossator. cf. Introd.

2. Verses 2, 3, Chron. gloss. cf. Introd. xii LXX. l. "the hand of Yahweh was upon *ME*" and dl. שׁם.

3. Add. c. LXX. בה.

4. Dl. ומִתּוֹכָהּ.

5. Verse 5b seems to be a gloss, influenced by 26b. 5a is the beginning of the detailed elaboration of the cherubim cf. Introduction. . .

6. l. c. LXX. עליהן for להנה.

7. Dl. c. LXX. להם msc. pl. is incorrect.

8. l. c. Syr. רגלי שׁוֹרוֹת. Pl. necessary.

9. l. עגֻלה for ככף רגל עגל which LXX. dls.

10. l. וידי.

11. LXX. dl. וכנפיהם. prps. correctly.

12. Add for sense מקדם לארבעתן

13. Add לאחור

14. Dl. ופניהם out of place.

15. l. אשה אל־אחוֹתָה.

16. l. c. LXX. בתוך for ודמות.

17. l. c. LXX. מראה.

18. Dl. כמרא הלפדים היא LXX. l. הלפדים.

19. Dl. verse 14. as in LXX. Translation impossible.

20. Dl. c. LXX and 8:2, החיות.

21. l. לארבעתן and dl. פניו.

22. l. ומראה.

23. Dl. c. LXX ומעשׂיהם.

24. Dl. c. LXX ומראיהם.

25. Dl. c. LXX בלכתם.

26. Dl. as corrupt 18a.

27. Dl. first phrase dittog. from verse. 20a and second phrase dittog. from verse 21.

28. l. c. LXX. Syr. ראשׁ for ראשׁי.

29. l. c. Vrs. החיות.

30. l. c. LXX כרקיע.

31. Dl. c. LXX הנורא.

32. Dl. c. LXX נטוי על-ראשׁיהם מלמעלה.

33. l. c. LXX^A נטויות for ישׁרות.

34. Dl. as dittog.

35. Dl. the three phrases are interpretative glosses.

36. l. c. LXX ובעמדם.

37. Dl. verse 25 as dittog.

38. Dl. c. LXX. עליו.

39. Verse 27a, which interrupts the sequence of 26 and 27b is a double gloss. The first part goes back to 1:4, while the second part is found in 1:4, 27.

CHAPTERS 2 and 3.

1. Dl. c. LXX כאשׁר דבר אלי.

2. l. c. LXX אתו מדבר.

3. l. c. LXX בית for בני and dl. c. LXX אל-גוים.

4. Dl. c. LXX פשׁעו בי apparently a scribal gloss using a synonym for rebell.

5. Dl. c. LXX. scribal repetition.

6. Dl. c. LXX. והמה.

7. l. c. LXX. Syr. אַתָּה for היה. The emphasis here is on you, not on Prophet.

8. l. c. LXX. תחת or תחרד.

9. l. c. Vrs. בתוך for אל.

10. Dl. probably scribal repetition.

11. Add c. LXX בית.

12. l. c. LXX, בהּ for והנה בוֹ.

13. Dl. c. LXX scribal repetition.

14. Dl. c. LXX הזאות.

15. l. c. LXX ואכלה.

16. Dl. c. LXX. The first phrase. Influenced by Ex. 4:10. The second phrase scribal repetition.

17. Dl. c. Syr.

18. l. c. LXX אם and dl. לא.

19. l. as in 10:4, 16, 19 ברום for ברוך, which was probably introduced from Isaiah 6:3.

20. Dl. c. LXX.

21. Dl. c. LXX^B מר.

22. l. c. LXX. על.

23. Dl. c. Syr. ואשׁר המה יושׁבים שׁם.

24. l. משׁמם.

25. Dl. c. Syr. להזהיר.

26. Add c. Syr. ל.
27. add. c. LXX לשוב.
28. Dl. הוא רשע a scribal repetition.
29. l. c. LXX. הרשע ההוא.
30. l. מצדקתו.
31. Dl. a theological gloss.
32. l. c. LXX. הזהרתָ.
33. Dl. c. Vrs. צדיק.
34. Add c. LXX. Syr. צדיק.
35. l. אֹתָךְ for אותך.

CHAPTER 4.

1. Dl. את-ירושלם as explanatory gloss.
2. l. c. LXX ושמת and dl. עליה.
3. l. c. LXX עליה.
4. l. ונשאתָ for ושמת.
5. l. c. LXX. כמספר.
6. l. c. LXX ונשאתָ.
7. LXX has 190 days.
8. Dl. c. LXX שנית, a marginal gloss, referring back to verse 4.
9. Dl. c. LXX. Syr. יום לשנה.
10. l. c. some MSS. מצוריךְ.
11. Dl. c. LXX אשר.
12. Add c. LXX, ואמרתָ כאשר which is the usual formula.

CHAPTER 5.

1. l. c. Syr. כתער, cf. Isa. 7:20.
2. l. באש, no evidence that באור has this meaning.
3. Dl. c. LXX ולקחת-את and l. והשלשית, and l. ותכה.
4. Dl. phrase וחרב אריק אחריהם scribal repetition from 5:12.
5. l. c. Vrs. בכנפֶךָ, sg.
6. Dl. ממנו תצא-אש and l. ואמרת c. LXX. Verse 4, is prb. a post-exilic interpretation.
7. l. c. LXX. Syr. ובחקותי.
8. l. המרתכם for המנכם.
9. l. c. Vrs. ובחקותי.
10. Dl. for sense לא.
11. Dl. c. Vrs. ונם אני.
12. l. c. Vrs. יען אשר.
13. Dl. c, LXX בכל־שקוציך ו a late marginal gloss.
14. l. c. LXX. Syr. אגעל cf. 16:45.
15. Dl. c. LXX והנחתי חמתי, and והנחמתי
16. l. c. LXX. ותדעתי for וידעו.
17. Dl. ולחרפה בנוים אשר סביבותיך. Corruption of preceding word and phrases following.
18. l. c. Vrs. והיית for והיתה.
19. Dl. c. LXX באף ובחמה.
20. l. תוכחת and חסתי.
21. Dl. אני יהוה דברתי. Scribal, from Vs. 17.
22. l. חִצַּי; Dl. הרעב, l. בכם for בהם.
23. Dl. אשר היו למשחית אשר־אשלח אותם the text is hopeless.
24. l. c. LXX. שכלתיך.

CHAPTER 6.

1. l. c. LXX על for אל.
2. l. c. LXX עליהם.
3. Dl. c. LXX אני, which is not used with הנני.
4. l. c. LXX ואבדו to correspond with verbs following.
5. Dl. c. LXX a scribal comment taken from Lev. 26:30. The change to the third person from the second, betrays the commentator.
6. l. וישמו.
7. Dl. c. LXX ויאשמו, for sense.
8. Dl. c. LXX. ונשבתו.
9. Dl. c. LXX. ונחמו מעשיכם.
10. Dl. c. LXX והותרתי. Probably a note on פליטי of verse 9. But בהיות of verse 8 follows immediately after 7.
11. l. c. LXX^A ושברתי, the form נשברתי is impossible.
12. Dl. c. LXX אל־הרעות אשר עשו a weak amplification of the following.
13. Dl. c. LXX, לא אל־חנם also לעשות להם הרעה הזאת cf. 14:23b.
14. l. prob. האח האח. LXX ἐ̑υ γε
15. Dl. כל־תועבות רעות.
16. l. c. LXX על.
17. Dl. c. LXX. והנשאר, a gloss to הנצור.
18. l. c. Syr. ידעו to agree with third person throughout this passage.
19. Dl. c. LXX בכל־ראשי ההרים.
20. Dl. c. LXX ותחת כל־אלה עבתה and מקום.
21. l. רבלתה, a place in North of historic importance of this period.

CHAPTER 7.

1. Add c. LXX. Syr. אמר.
2. l. c. LXX לא for ולא.
3. l. c. LXX כדבריך for כי דב'.
4. l. c. LXX. Syr. וידעת.
5. l. c. Syr. תחת for אחת.
6. l. בא הקץ (Bewer, JBL. 1926^{226}). For קץ. באה.
7. l. עליך.
8. l. בציר for פצירה.
9. Dl. c. LXX ולא־הד הרים.
10. Dl. מכה. Probably a marginal note indicating repetition.
11. Dl. c. LXX. ועוד בחיים חיתם.
12. l. חרון for חזון.
13. Dl. phrase. Repetition from Verse 12.
14. l. תקוע.
15. l. c. LXX על.
16. l. c. LXX ועל־כל־ראש.
17. Dl. 19b c. LXX, a scribal comment.
18. l. c. LXX, Syr. שָׂמֻהוּ.
19. Dl. c. LXX שקוצים, a late gloss.
20. l. הבתוק for הרתוק.
21. l. באה for בא.
22. Dl. c. LXX המלך יתאבל. Ezekiel never uses מלך for king Zedekiah. Prob. an early interpretation; but superfluous.
23. l. כדברם for מדברם.

CHAPTER 8.

1. Dl. c. LXX כמראה.
2. l. c. LXX איש for אש.
3. Dl. c. LXX מראה.
4. Dl. c. LXX זהר כעין. Prob. explanatory gloss influenced by 1:4.
5. Dl. c. LXX. Syr. המקנה, unintelligible.
6. Dl. verse 4. No relation to the context. Editorial work, cf. 1:28.
7. Dl. c. LXX. הזה הבאה.
8. l. c. LXX. Syr. הראִיתָ
9. l. לרחקני for לרחקה.
10. Dl. c. LXX Verse 7b and 8. Added as explanatory gloss to verses 10–12, which describe worship that probably was secrete. However it is not in agreement with 7a.
11. Dl. c. LXX. סביב.
12. Dl. c. LXX עמד. All the men were standing.
13. Dl. c. LXX ענן.
14. Dl. איש בחדרי משׂכיתו LXX dl. בחדרי. The passage is corrupt. Ehrlich has emended to read "Each one in the chambers of my dwelling; משכני, which gives good sense.
15. l. c. LXX. נשים.
16. l. c. LXX בפתח.
17. l. משתחוים.
18. Dl. c. LXX קדמה.
19. Dl. c. LXX. וישבו להכעיסני.
20. l. c. Tiq Soph. אפי.
21. Dl. c. LXX. scribal gloss from 9:1.

CHAPTER 9.

1. ואיש כלי משחת בידו an explanatory gloss on verse 2.
2. l. c. LXX השער.
3. l. c. LXX הפנה.
4. Verse 3, a theological explanation, related to 8:4 but here interrupting the thought.
5. l. c. LXX הכרובים, pl. form. Though Ehrlich's suggestion המכבה is attractive.
6. Dl. c. Syr. עליו.
7. Dl. c. LXX יהוה.
8. Dl. בתוך ירושלים an explanatory gloss. LXX dl. בתוך העיר.
9. l. c. LXX ונתת for והתוית.
10. l. c. LXX. לא for על.
11. l. c. LXX ובחור.
12. Dl. c. LXX.^{A} האנשים.
13. l. c. Syr. וצאו.
14. l. c. Syr. ואשאר.
15. Dl. ויהודה. Superfluous. Late gloss.
16. l. מוטה.

CHAPTER 10.

1. l. c. LXX על.
2. Dl. c. LXX כמראה.
3. Dl. c. LXX ויאמר.
4. l. c. LXX אשר.
5. l. c. LXX pl. כרבים.
6. l. c. LXX בא for באו.
7. l. c. LXX אל.
8. Dl. c. LXX. הכרוב.

9. Dl. c. LXX, מבינות לכרבים

10. Dl. whole phrase, like 9 a theological gloss.

11. Dl. לארבעתם אופניהם, dittography.

12. Verse 14 is absent from LXX. Possibly editorial.

13. l. והמה for וירמו which here is unintelligent.

14. Dl. c. Syr. גם הם.

15. l. c. LXX ויעמדו.

16. Dl. c. LXX ארבעה dittography.

17. Dl. c. LXX מאריהם and l. והמה for אותם.

CHAPTER 12.

1. Dl. c. LXX. וגלה, gloss that does not recognize last part of verse.

2. Dl. c. Syr. לךָ

3. l. c. Vrs. וְיָצאת

4. Dl. c. Syr. לעיניהם.

5. l. תצא.

6. Dl. c. LXX. Syr. ביד.

7. l. c. LXX. Syr. ובעלטה.

8. l. c. Vrs. יצאתי.

9. l. c. Syr. לכם, in keeping with previous suffixes.

10. l. c. Syr. תלכו.

11. l. c. Syr. בתוככם.

12. l. c. LXX על.

13. l. ובעלטה יצא.

14. l. c. LXX יחתר.

15. l. c. LXX לצאת.

16. l. c. LXX. למען.

17. Dl. c. Syr. לעין הוא.

18. l. c. Vrs. עֹזריו

19. Dl. ואותה לא־יראה. Like no. 17 a gloss based on history (II Kings 25:7).

20. l. ומהר for ודבר.

21. Vocalize דבר, as pual form (Hermann). Sense is excellent, though form no place else.

CHAPTER 13.

1. l. c. Vrs. על.

2. l. c. LXX הִנָּבא Niph. imper.

3. Dl. c. LXX ונביאי מלכם and l. אליהם.

4. l. c. LXX בפרץ ולא גדרו

5. l. חזוֹ שוא וקסמוֹ LXX read 3rd pl. pf.

6. Dl. c. LXX both phrases.

7. Add c. LXX אמר.

8. l. עליכם.

9. l. c. Vrs. על.

10. l. c. LXX. Syr. והמה.

11. Dl. c. LXX ויפל.

12. Dl. ואתנה.

13. l. c. Syr. תִבָּקע Niph. impf.

14. l. c. Syr. בחמתי.

15. l. c. Syr. Targ. ויאמר, Niph. impf.

16. l. c. Syr. איה for negative אין.

17. Dl. חזון.

18. l. c. Syr. ידים.

19. l. c. Syr. בם for שם.

20. Dl. c. LXX לפרח, an explanatory gloss.

21. l. את־חפשים for superfluous את־ נפשים שלח חפשי is technical phrase for set free. Cf. Deut. 15:12, 13, 18; Jer. 34:9, 10, 11. Isaiah 58:6.

22. Dl. c. LXX.^{B} שקר.

CHAPTER 14.

1. l. האדרש Inf. abs. Niph,

2. l. c. LXX בי for בה.

3. Dl. c. LXX כלם.

4. l. ושמתיהו. instead of Hiph. form.

5. l. יצִּילוּ Hiph.; LXX l. יִצָּלו Niph. but omitted נפשם.

6. l. c. vss. 17, 19 אוֹ for לוֹ

7. l. c. LXX. Syr. וְשִׁכַּלתיה

8. l. על.

9. l. c. LXX, Syr. המוצאים.

10. l. c. Syr. הֵמָּה for הנם.

CHAPTER 15.

1. Dl. c. LXX.^{B} הזמורה.

2. l. c. LXX. היקחו

3. l. בעצי.

4. MT preferred to LXX, wh. reads They shall know.

CHAPTER 16.

1. למשעי most uncertain. Vulg. has *ad salutem*, as from ישע. Many translations take as related to Misû. to cleanse.

2. l. בדמך. Meaning of pl. form impossible here.

3. Dl. as dittography.
4. l. c. LXX.^{B} רבי.
5. Dl. scribal addition.
6. l. בעת עֲדִים for בעדי עדיים.
7. l. c. Vrs. שׁדיך for שׁדים.
8. l. Qre. אכלת 2nd form.
9. Dl. c. LXX. ותצלחי למלוכה.
10. Dl. c. LXX.^{B} לו יהי; LXX^{h} had לו היית.
11. Dl. c. Syr. לא באות ולא יהיה. Probably like 10 a scribal marginal comment.
12. l. c. Qre נתת.
13. Dl. as scribal gloss by most.
14. l. נתת 2nd fem.
15. Dl. ויהי meaningless gloss.
16. LXX Dl. לי; MT preferred.
17. l. c. Qre זכרת.
18. Dl. c. LXX. the two phrases interrupt the narrative.
19. l. c. LXX ובראשׁ כל־דרך.
20. Dl. Vs. 27 as foreign to context.
21. Dl. c. LXX כנען.
22. Dl. מה אמלה לבתך; scribal gloss now unintelligible.
23. l. c. Qre עשׂית.
24. l. c. Qre היית.
25. l. as in Vs. 33 לכנס for לקלס.
26. Dl. Vs. 32, as explanatory gloss.
27. Dl. c. LXX phrase.
28. l. הָשְׁפֵּךְ.
29. l. c. LXX אל for על.
30. l. ובדמי for וכדמי.
31. l. c. Qre נתת.
32. l. ענבת as in 23:5, 7, 9.
33. l. c. Vrs. משׁפט.
34. l. c. Qre זכרת.
35. l. c. Vrs. ותרגזי.
36. הא of MT prob. for הנה.
37. l. c. Syr. LXX בראשׁך.
38. Dl. as gloss.
39. l. c. Vrs. אחיותיך.
40. l. c. Qre עשׂית.
41. meaningless.
42. l. c. important MSS LXX. ראית.
43. l. c. Vrs. לאחיותיך.
44. l. c. LXX ותצדקין.
45. l. c. Qre שְׁבוּת.
46. l. c. Vrs. ושׁבתי and שְׁבוּתֵךְ.
47. a. . . a is probably a late interpolation. So Heinisch as is b. . . b. of verse 55.
48. l. c. LXX בימי.
49. l. עֶרְוָתֵךְ cf. Vs. 37.
50. MT is difficult. Many emend to read. "But now you are a reproach of. . ."
51. a few Syr. MSS. l. אדום for ארום and this is followed by some translators.
52. Dl. c. LXX כי.
53. l. c. Qre and Vrs. ועשׂיתי.
54. l. אִתָּךְ.
55. l. c. LXX בריתי.
56. l. c. Syr. בקחתי.

CHAPTER 17.

1. MT. קח is hopeless, omitted in LXX. וינחהו suggested by Kittel.
2. l. ויצלח וְיהי, impf. c. ו conj.
3. l. c. LXX אחר.
4. l. פֻּנְתָּה for כפנה.
5. l. אליו for עליו.
6. l. ודליותיה, fem. suf.
7. l. c. LXX על.
8. Dl. c. LXX. dittog.
9. Dl. a late gloss. Theological interpretation.
10. l. c. LXX. לַעֲמְדָהּ.
11. l. הפר.
12. l. c. Targ. Syr. מבחריו.
13. Dl. c. LXX הרמה ונתתי.
14. l. פארה c. Cornill for פרי a cedar tree does not bear fruit.

CHAPTER 18.

1. l. c. LXX. Syr. אכלו, cf. Jer. 31:29.
2. Dl. c. LXX לכם.
3. l. על־הדם cf. LXX. Note Verses 11, 15 and 22:9, 33:25, I Sam. 14:23, Lv. 19:26.
4. l. קרב.
5. Dl. prob. חוב.
6. l. c. LXX אתם.
7. Dl. 10b textual corruption.
8. Dl. וחי and transp. athnah to יְחִ֑יה.
9. l. ימות.
10. l. c. LXX. מעול for מעני.
11. l. גזלה and dl. אח.
12. l. c. LXX עמי.
13. l. במות.
14. Dl. c. Vrs. יעשה וחי.
15. Dl. ומת עליהם.
16. l. c. LXX sg. דרכִּי.

CHAPTER 19.

1. l. c. LXX. על־נשׂיא.
2. l. c. LXX בתוך for בין.
3. l. c. LXX על for אל.
4. l. וישמיעו Hiph.
5. l. c. Bertholet נֶהֱלָא for נוחלה.
6. l. c. LXX אחר for אחד.
7. l. c. LXX וירע for וידע.
8. l. ארמנתיו.
9. l. יקבצו or יחנו.
10. Probably a gloss. Spoils the metre.
11. l. בַּכרם
12. l. ויהי לה מטה.
13. l. c. LXX שֵׁבָט.
14. l. c. Bertholet בתפארתו cf. Ps. 96:6.
15. Dl. c. LXX פריה.

CHAPTER 20.

1. l. c. Vrs. אל־.
2. l. c. Syr. נתתי cf. Verse 15.
3. Add c. LXX ארץ.
4. l. c. Vrs. להם.
5. l. c. Syr. בזאת.
6. Dl. c. LXX, the whole phrase, as a scribal gloss.
7. l. c. Syr. במופר and dl. הברית.
8. l. c. LXX יבאו.

CHAPTER 21.

1. l. c. LXX על.
2. l. c. Syr. אשר בנגד.
3. l. c. Syr. and 4 MSS. מקדשֶׁיהָ.
4. Text impossible to reconstruct, probably a scribal note.
5. l. למרצח for למרטה.
6. Scribal note related to 15b M.T.
7. l. ושלַשתה, Piel perfect.
8. l. c. LXX הַמִּכְשָׁל.
9. l. מְרֻטָּה for מעטה.
10. l. התעברי for התאבדי.
11. Dl. ברא dittog. from above.
12. Dl. לשום כרים, dittog. from below.
13. l. c. LXX בצרח cf. Isaiah 42:13.
14. l. c. LXX Syr. שעָרֶיהָ.
15. Dl. whole phrase.
16. l. c. LXX בהם.
17. Dl. c. Syr. זאת לא זאת.
18. Dl. phrase.
19. l. לברק and dl. להכיל למען.
20. l. אתהּ for אתך.

CHAPTER 22.

1. Dl. c. LXX, Syr. התשפט.
2. l. sg. יומך.
3. l. c. LXX, Syr. ותביאי על־.
4. l. בדם or על־הדם (cf. 18:6, 11, 15, Deut. 18:6).
5. l. c. LXX, Syr. גלו.
6. l. c. LXX על.
7. l. c. LXX דמַיִךְ.
8. l. ליום for לימים.
9. l. בכל־עיני for בך לעיני.
10. Dl. כסף.
11. l. c. Vrs. כקבצת.
12. l. c. LXX להנתך.
13. Add c. Syr. אתכם.
14. l. c. LXX כהֻנָּתֵךְ.
15. l. מֻטָּרָה or הֻמְטָרָה.
16. l. נְשַׁמָּה.
17. l. c. LXX אשר נשִׂיאֶיהָ.

CHAPTER 23.

1. l. שם for שמה.
2. l. עֻשׂוּ pual pass. cf. בעשׂות verse 21; עסס.
3. l. c. Vrs. מתחתי.
4. l. על־ for אל־.
5. l. c. LXX קֵרבים להּ.
6. l. as in verse 6 תכלה for מכלול.
7. Dl. verse 21 as scribal gloss. Second personal pronouns separate it from context.
8. l. למעךְ for למען.
9. l. אִתָּם for אוֹתם.
10. l. ונגלתה for ונגלה and punctuate זנוּנַיִךְ.
11. Dl. c. LXX ביום ההוא.
12. l. c. Qre סָבָאִים wine bibbers. cf. Gen. 10:7. An attractive emendation is מואבים for מובאם and Kithib סבָאים, reading "Moabites and Sabaeans from the desert."
13. Dl. והיא.
14. l. c. Vrs. ויבאו.
15. l. וכרתו for וברא.

CHAPTER 24.

1. Dl. c. Syr. את־עצם היום הזה. A case of dittography from below.

2. l. על־ for אל־.

3. l. c. LXX נתחים.

4. l. וקדוח.

5. l. העצים.

6. l. נתחיה or רתחיה.

7. l. חלאה.

7a. Prob. mispelled and should be read after vs. 10. So Toy. Cornill.

8. Dl. c. LXX תאנים הלאת.

9. Read הלאתה as first word of verse 13, and change punctuation.

10. l. c. MSS. שׂפטיך or c. Vrs. אשפטך.

11. l. prob. אבל מתים.

12. l. אבלים or אונים for אנשים.

13. l. להשמיע באזניך.

CHAPTER 25.

1. l. c. LXX על.

2. l. ערי for בני cf. 21:25.

3. l. לבז for לבג.

4. Dl. c. LXX.^{B} שׂעיר.

5. Dl. מהערים LXX dl. מעריו.

6. l. c. LXX נקום for בהם.

CHAPTER 26.

1. l. c. Vrs. כעלות.

2. l. על.

3. l. c. LXX ובקהל עם־רב cf. 23:46; 32:28; 38:46.

4. l. פרשיו.

5. l. c. LXX כבוא בעיר.

6. l. c. LXX יוריד.

7. l. prps חרב for בהרג הרג.

8. l. prps חגרות for חרדות.

9. l. c. LXX נשבת equiv. Aram. נשף.

10. Verse 18b a gloss or corrupt text.

11. Dl. ונִתתי צבי as gloss. on הארץ.

CHAPTER 27.

1. l. c. LXX. Syr. מבוא הים.

2. l. c. Syr. pl. ארזים.

3. l. c. LXX. תרנים.

4. l. בתאשרים cf. Ezk 31:3, Isaiah 41:19, 60:13.

5. l. חכמי צמר.

6. l. וגמרים for the unknown גמדים.

7. l. c. LXX רדן.

8. l. סחרתיך.

9. l. c. LXX אדם.

10. l. בחטים.

11. l. דונג for the unknown פנג.

12. Dl. c. LXX ור ויון.

13. Dl. רכלי. Prob. a place name such as חוילה was here originally. cf. Gen. 10:7 so Cornill.

14. l. רכליך and dl. following שׁבא.

15. l. c. Targ. prob. וכל־מדי for כלמד.

16. l. שַׂרתוך.

17. l. עליך.

18. l. נִדמה Niph. of דמה.

19. l. c. Vrs. עתה.

CHAPTER 28.

1. l. c. LXX הָחכם and dl. הנה.

2. l. ותאסף.

3. Dl. יפי.

4. Dl. ממותי חלל.

5. l. c. LXX. Syr. אָת for אַת.

6. l. לראות.

7. l. c. LXX על.

CHAPTER 29.

1. Dl. c. LXX. דבר.

2. l. תנין for תנים.

3. l. c. LXX Syr. יארך, sg. form of the noun.

4. l. c. Syr. עשׂיתיו.

5. l. c. Trg. תקָּבר for תקבץ.

6. l. c. Vrs. היותך.

7. l. c. LXX Syr. בכפָּם

8. l. המעדת consonants transposed העמדת

9. l. c. Vrs. אָמרך

10. l. על for אל in עליך; על.

11. l. c. LXX. Syr. לחרבה for לחרבות חרב.

12. l. c. Vrs. והיו.

13. Dl. c. LXX. Syr. אשר עשׂו לי, scribal explanation.

CHAPTER 30.

1. Dl. ולוד dittog.

2. Dl. כוב quite unknown.

3. l. c. LXX הכרֵתי for הברית and dl. ארץ,

4. Dl. c. LXX בָּם.
5. Dl. c. LXX כה אמר יהוה.
6. l. c. LXX ונשַׁמָּה for ונשמו.
7. l. ועריהָ.
8. Dl. c. LXX, the sentence.
9. Dl. c. LXX.$^{\mathrm{Or.}}$ והאבדתי גלולים, theological gloss.
10. l. c. LXX אילים for אילילים.
11. Dl. sentence. Theological gloss.
12. l. c. Cornill ונפרצו חומתיהָ.
13. l. מטה for מטות.
14. l. c. LXX על for אל.

CHAPTER 31.

1. l. תאשור as in 27:6. Isaiah 60:13. Dl. ארז.
2. Dl. c. LXX.$^{\mathrm{B}}$ the phrase, incongruous.
3. l. c. LXX עָבות, punctuation only change.
4. l. c. LXX הולכה. Fem. c. תהום.
5. l. c. LXX מטעו.
6. Dl. c. LXX משלחו.
7. l. כפארתיו, ר in text transposed incorrectly.
8. l. c. Syr. גָּבַהּ בקומתו.
9. Dl. as meaningless, the phrase.
10. l. c. LXX על.
11. Dl. כל־שתי מים.
12. Dl. c. LXX כסתי.
13. l. c. Vrs. עלפו.
14. Dl. phrase. Hebrew unintelligent: LXX no aid. Probably three descriptive glosses.
15. Dl. c. LXX ככה.

CHAPTER 32.

1. l. תדמיךָ. This form of the verb only here.
2. l. c. 29: תנין.
3. l. as Job 41:12 בנחרוֹתֶיךָ.
4. Dl. the phrase, partly c. LXX.
5. l. c. LXX והעליתיך.
6. l. c. LXX רמתךָ for מדמךָ.
7. Dl. אל ההרים dittog. from Verse 5.
8. l. c. LXX, Syr. בכְבתךָ.
9. l. c. LXX ופרַסת.
10. Dl. c. LXX את הארץ.
11. l. c. Vrs. ונשָׁמָה.
12. Add c. LXX. . . בראשון.
13. Dl. explanatory gloss to verses 22–27, influenced by verse 16b.
14. Dl. the phrase.
15. Dl. c. LXX ואתה.
16. l. c. LXX חמונו, referring back to verse 18.
17. l. c. LXX. וידברו.
18. l. נפלים.
19. Dl. 22b duplicate of 23b.
20. Dl. verse 25, duplicate of parts of 24, 26.
21. l. c. LXX, סביבות קרבתָהּ.
22. l. מעולם for מערלים.
23. l. צנתם for עונותם.
24. Dl. c. LXX$^{\mathrm{A}}$ תשברו.
25. Dl. phrase.
26. l. c. Targ. נתן חתיתו.

CHAPTER 33.

1. l. c. LXX החרב.
2. l. הזהיר Hiph. for Niph.
3. Dl. c. LXX רשע.
4. l. c. LXX$^{\mathrm{A}}$ חיה תחיה.
5. l. c. LXX, Syr. וַחֲבל.
6. l. יהוה for אדני.
7. l. c. LXX$^{\mathrm{A}}$ בו for בהם.
8. l. prob. עת for עד.
9. l. c. LXX לאָכְלָה.
10. Dl. חד את־אחד, an interpretation of phrase that follows. חד is Aramaic.
11. Dl. c. LXX עמי.
12. l. c. LXX, Syr. כבזים, better sense.
13. Dl. המה עֹשים.

CHAPTER 34.

1. Dl. c. LXX$^{\mathrm{B}}$ לרעים.
2. l. c. LXX ואת־צאני for הצאן.
3. l. c. LXX ובַחֲצָקה.
4. Dl. c. LXX. אתם ן.
5. Add c. LXX צאנִי.
6. Dl. c. LXX ואפוצינה.
7. Dl. c. LXX צאנִי.
8. l. על for אל.
9. l. c. LXX צאני.
10. l. c. LXX ופקדתים, preferable to ובקרתים.

11. l. c. Syr. ביום סופה, or ביום סערה, and dl. ובחוך.
12. l. c. LXX. ובמרעה.
13. l. c. LXX אשמר for אשמיד.
14. l. וארענה.
15. l. c. LXX.^{B} ואַתַּן הצאני.
16. Dl. c. LXX אליהם.
17. l. c. MSS. בריאה.
18. Dl. c. LXX, הוא ירעה אתם.
19. Dl. c. LXX אתם.

CHAPTER 35.

1. l. c. LXX עליךָ.
2. ודם ירדפךָ כי להם אעשךָ LXX dls. ודם ירדפךָ.
3. l. בדם אשמת cf. 22:4.
4. l. שממָה ומשמה.
5. Dl. c. LXX את־הריו.
6. l. c. LXX pl. חללים.
7. l. c. Vrs. שממַת.
8. l. Hoph. תושבנה cf. 36:33.
9. l. c. LXX sg. וְיָדַעְתָּ.
10. l. c. Vrs. וירשתִּיהָ.
11. Add c. LXX^B, Syr. לךָ.
12. l. c. LXX ותגדל.
13. l. כשמחתךָ לארצי כי שממה.
14. Dl. נחלת בית ישראל.
15. l. c. LXX. וידעתָּ.

CHAPTER 36.

1. l. c. Toy מורשה ובזה.
2. Add c. LXX לכם.
3. l. על.
4. Dl. c. LXX, the phrase.
5. l. c. Vrs. ויבאו, pl. for sg.
6. Dl. c. LXX.^{B}, נאם אדני יהוה.

CHAPTER 37.

1. Dl. ברוח יהוה, a theological gloss. cf. 11:24.
2. l. c. Vrs. צִנְּנִי.
3. Dl. c. LXX^B, קול. Explanatory.
4. l. העצמות c. article.
5. l. c. Syr. ויִקָּרֵם Niph.
6. l. ונבאתי for Hithp.
7. l. c. LXX אבדה.
8. Dl. c. LXX. Syr. עמי.
9. l. c. Syr. אחר for אחד.
10. Dl. as dittog. עץ אפרים.
11. l. c. Syr. לעץ אחד בידךָ for לאחדים בידךָ; and dl. לךָ לעץ אחד.
12. Dl. c. LXX Syr. למלךָ.
13. Dl. c. LXX, Syr. עוד.
14. l. c. LXX, Syr. אבותיהם.
15. Dl. c. LXX, ונתתים והרביתי אתם.

CHAPTER 38.

1. l. c. LXX על.
2. Dl. ארץ מגוג.
3. Dl. verse 5. Borrowed from 27:10, 30:25, Irrelevant here.
4. i. c. LXX בית תוגרמה.
5. l. c. LXX לִי for להם.
6. l. מחרב.
7. l. אִתָּךְ.
8. Add c. Vrs. על.
9. l. וסחרֶיהָ.
10. l. c. LXX תער.
11. Dl. c. LXX,$^{Or.}$ גוג.
12. l. c. LXX ושנים.
13. l. c. LXX לכל־חֲרָדָה for הרי חרב.

CHAPTER 39.

1. l. c. LXX על.
2. l. ומשכתיךָ.
3. l. c. LXX. בגוג.
4. l. c. LXX. שם.
5. l. חסמו את־הגיא.
6. l. c. LXX, Syr. וקברום.
7. l. c. Syr. ביום.
8. l. c. LXX לקבֹּר.
9. Dl. c. LXX, Syr. את־העברים.
10. l. ונשו.

CHAPTER 40.

1. Dl. c. LXX שמה.
2. l. cf. LXX מנגדי.
3. l. c. Ehr. באתי.
4. Dl. c. LXX, the phrase.
5. Dl. c. Mlt MSS Verse dittog. from 7b.
6. Add c. LXX ומפה.
7. Dl. Verse 14, dittog.
8. l. ומעל for ועל and עד for על.
9. l. על for אל.

10. Dl. c. LXX עשׂוי.
11. Dl. c. LXX הקדים and l. ויולכני דרך.
12. Dl. verse 30. dittog.
13. l. לאלם for לעולם.
14. l. c. LXX שתים for שרים.
14a. l. c. LXX ופניהָ.
14b. l. c. LXX הדרוֹם.
15. l. c. LXX איל האלם.
16. l. c. LXX עשׂר for אשר.

CHAPTER 41.

1. Dl. c. LXX, רחב אהל.
2. l. c. LXX, שלשים שלש.
3. l. על for אל.
4. l. c. LXX בין for בית.
5. Dl. מקום.
6. l. c. LXX ספונים for הספים of verse 16.
7. l. c. I K. 6:4 שקוף for שחיף.
8. l. עשׂוים.
9. l. c. LXX הספון.
10. Dl. וקיר ההיכל.
11. l. כרובים.

CHAPTER 42.

1. l. c. LXX הפנימית for החיצונה.
2. l. c. LXX והנה לשכות.
3. l. c. LXX ונגד for ואשר נגד.
3a. Both phrases are impossible.
4. Dl. פתח הצפון.
5. l. c. LXX וארך אמות מאה.
6. l. בראש הגדר החצון.
7. l. c. LXX הדרום for הקדים.
8. l. c. LXX ולשכות.
9. Dl. c. LXX. בקנה המדה.
10. Dl. c. LXX קנים.
11. l. וסבב ומדה.

CHAPTER 43.

1. Dl. c. LXX שער.
2. Dl. וכמרא המרא אשר ראיתי.
3. l. prob. בבא יהוה or בבאי.
4. l. על for אל.
5. Dl. ויכלמו מעונותיהם.
6. l. c. LXX ומראהוּ ותכניתוֹ.
7. l. c. LXX, והם יכלמוּ.
8. Add c. LXX גבהּ.
9. l. אמה for האמה.
10. l. ולגבולהּ.
11. l. c. LXX. גבהּ.
12. Add c. LXX מראש.
13. l. c. LXX האריאל.
14. l. c. LXX. אמה and dl. ארבה.
15. l. c. LXX. קרנות המזבח.

CHAPTER 44.

1. Dl. c. LXX את.
2. l. על for אל.
3. l. בית המרי for אל־מרי.
4. Dl. c. LXX את־ביתי.
5. l. c. LXX, ותפרוּ.
6. l. c. LXX בכל for את־כל.
7. l. ותשימום, refers to foreigners.
8. l. cf. LXX. לשמר משמרת.
9. l. c. LXX לכן for לכם and transfer to verse 9.
10. l. שמרים.
11. Dl. אל־החצר החיצונה.
12. Dl. c. LXX אלמנה.
13. l. c. LXX. יָבאוּ.
14. Dl. c. LXX אל־הקדש.
15. Add c. Vg. ולא.
16. l. c. LXX על־בתיכם.

CHAPTER 45.

1. l. c. LXX עשׂרים.
2. Transpose Verse 2 after 4.
3. l. חמשה and dl. ובו־יהיה המקדש קדש קדשים. Both 2. and 3. demanded by late descriptions.
4. l. c. LXX לשבת ערים for עשׂרים לשכת.
5. l. על.
6. l. לעמת.
7. l. c. LXX. נשׂיאי ישראל.
8. The MT. is confused l. c. LXX^{A} חמשה for 2nd עשׂרים and l. ועשׂרים for 2nd חמשה and l. חמשים for 3rd חמשה.
9. Dl. c. LXX. dittog.
10. l. את for אל.
11. l. c. LXX. בשביעי באחד לחדש.
12. Tansp. חַג to before הפסח.
13. l. c. LXX תאכלוּ.

CHAPTER 46.

1. l. c. MSS. LXX יצא.
2. l. c. LXX נחלת.
3. Dl. c. LXX מאחזתם.
4. l. c. LXX, קטנות for קטורות.

CHAPTER 47.

1. l. על.
2. l. המים החמוצים.
3. l. c. Vrs. הנחל.
4. l. c. No MSS. זה for גה.
5. l. דרךְ.
6. Ins. c. LXX. חמת and dl. חמת 16a.
7. l. c. vs. 17, 48:1 חצרה עינון.

CHAPTER 48.

1. l. מן־הים for אל־יד.
2. l. על for אל.
3. l. c. 45:1, עשׂרים.

3a. l. c. LXX. המקדשים בבני צדוק.

4. l. תרומה.
5. l. c. LXX. והלוים.
6. l. c. LXX. עשׂרים אלף.
7. l. ימרוּ.
8. l. יעבִרוּ.
9. Dl. והיה לעמת תרומת הקדש. Dittog.
10. l. ועבדי.
11. l. מרֻבע.
12. l. את for אל.
13. l. החלקים.
14. l. ואחזת.

14a. l. עד for על.

15. l. בנחלה.
16. Ins. c. LXX מדּה.
17. l. c. LXX. ושערים.

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